

ember 5 1985

Australia	100.15	Indonesia	17500	Portugal	100.00
Belgium	100.15	Italy	17500	S. Africa	100.00
Canada	100.15	Japan	17500	Singapore	100.00
Denmark	100.15	Malaysia	17500	Spain	100.00
France	100.15	Netherlands	17500	Sweden	100.00
Germany	100.15	Norway	17500	Switzerland	100.00
Greece	100.15	Philippines	17500	Taiwan	100.00
Hong Kong	100.15	South Korea	17500	Thailand	100.00
India	100.15	U.K.	17500	U.S.A.	100.00

# FINANCIAL TIMES

EUROPE'S BUSINESS NEWSPAPER

No. 29,772

Wednesday November 6 1985

D 8523 B

Why Africa needs  
new prescription  
from IMF, Page 18

## World news Business summary

### French win \$4bn US Army order

The Reagan Administration has opted for French rather than British technology in a \$4bn deal to buy a mobile battlefield communications system for the US Army.

The decision was announced last night after months of fierce competition between Thomson, the French state-owned electronics group, and Plessey of Britain, who submitted rival bids a year ago.

The US accord with the French, adding up to probably the biggest ever US-European arms deal, represents a considerable political and industrial setback for the UK Government.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher intervened personally in the last summer by writing to President Ronald Reagan to put forward the British case.

The contract, under which 25 divisions of the US Army will be equipped with a coded computerised communications network, will boost Thomson's efforts to market the system elsewhere, both within and outside Nato.

### Chilean protest starts

Seventeen bombs exploded and demonstrators disrupted public transport at the start of a 48-hour protest against Chile's military Government.

### Belgian bombings

An American bank in Charleroi and a Belgian-owned bank in Louvain were bombed. These follow two blasts in Belgian banks on Monday.

### Soviet convoy attack

Afghan rebels blew up at least 28 trucks as a convoy of petrol tankers crossed the Hindu Kush on its way from the Soviet Union to Kabul, Western diplomats said.

### Boesak restricted

South Africa withdrew the passport of anti-apartheid campaigner Rev Allan Boesak, despite a court ruling relaxing the terms of his bail.

### Diplomat found dead

Mexican diplomat Manuel Portillo Quevedo was found shot dead along with his Mexican maid in his Mexico City flat. Soviet authorities are investigating the deaths.

### New water mines

British firms have devised the first underwater mine to be operated by sonar. This would enable friendly ships to pass through mined waters.

### E. German protest

East Germany protested to Bonn that a West German destroyer ranged its guns on a merchant ship in the Baltic last week. Bonn denies the report.

### Barge sinks in fiord

Ten people were missing after a barge being used to build a floating concrete platform capsized in a Norwegian fiord near Stavanger.

### Green N-plant

A group of Austrian "Greens" and artists is raising money to buy the unused Zwentendorf nuclear power plant to turn it into an international ecology, peace and cultural centre.

### New Times editor

The new editor of The Times newspaper in London is to be Mr Charles Wilson, one of the paper's two deputy editors. He was chosen by a unanimous decision by the Times's six independent directors.

### German ship released

A West German cargo ship detained by the Iranian navy was allowed to proceed to Kuwait after inspection revealed it had no cargo for Iraq.

## Wide differences remain despite pre-summit talks

BY PATRICK COCKBURN IN MOSCOW AND REGINALD DALE IN WASHINGTON

TWO DAYS of intense discussions in Moscow between Mr George Shultz, US Secretary of State, and Soviet leaders ended yesterday without clearly paving the way for agreements at the Geneva summit in two weeks.

After 14 hours of meetings, first with Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, Soviet Foreign Minister, and then with Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, Mr Shultz confirmed that wide differences remained on the issues to be discussed by President Ronald Reagan and Mr Gorbachev.

Mr Shultz, saying that the exchanges with Mr Gorbachev had been "vigorous", believed that the discussions had been useful in identifying issues and explaining each side's position.

Despite the friendly atmosphere at yesterday's meeting at which Mr Shultz was accompanied by Mr Robert McFarlane, the National Security Adviser, and Mr Paul Nitze, the President's arms adviser, there is little sign of the Soviet Union modifying its negotiating position in the lead-up to Geneva.

The Soviet side gave a preliminary reaction to the U.S. counter-offer on nuclear arms reduction tabled in Geneva last Friday, but there is little sign that they regard it as bringing agreement any closer.

Mr Shultz did stress, however, that this week's discussions, the summit and possible future meetings showed that Moscow and Washington both wanted to keep in close contact on questions of mutual concern.

The case of the alleged Soviet defector, Mr Vitaly Yurchenko, was also discussed briefly, but it does not appear to have disrupted the exchanges. This seemed to confirm the view that both sides were working yesterday to defuse the affair well in advance of the summit.

In Washington, however, the Soviet embassy has strongly protested about the treatment of Mr Yurchenko which it described as "inhuman and illegal".

The State Department said that Mr Yurchenko was kidnapped, drugged and held for three months before he managed to escape from his guards and reach the Soviet embassy.

The report described how a senior assistant of Mr William Casey, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, offered Mr Yurchenko \$1m and a salary of \$82,000 a year if he defected. He later met Mr Casey in person.

## Pressure grows for Tin Council to resolve crisis

BY STEFAN WAGSTYL IN LONDON

THE International Tin Council today resumes its emergency meeting on the world tin market crisis under intense pressure to find ways of meeting its debts running into hundreds of millions of pounds.

But there is every sign that the 22 member governments will fail to find the quick answer which its bankers, the metal traders of the London Metal Exchange and the British Government, have been calling for.

At best, it seems that the tin council could make enough progress to make a positive, but bland, statement of intent by the end of the week and resume next week. At worst, the ITC could collapse, leaving its debts unpaid.

These debts have been built up, funding the efforts of the tin council, which administers a price pact between consuming and producing countries, to support tin prices above free market levels. Tin trading on the LME, the world's leading metals market, has been suspended since October 24 when the ITC announced it had run out of money.

A strong indication that it will take time to find solutions to the crisis came from a meeting in Brussels yesterday, at which representatives of European Community countries, which speak with one voice at the ITC, tried to co-ordinate their views.

They agreed that an independent audit was needed before any commitment to meet outstanding debts was made. It was premature to show willingness to meet a share of the ITC debts before auditors had determined the extent of the liabilities and who was liable, said diplomats. One said: "The question of who is responsible is open as far as the community is concerned."

It seems clear that the UK was unable to convince fellow EEC countries to back the initiative launched last week by Mr Leon Brittan, the Trade and Industry Secretary, who appealed to ITC members to meet their obligations. The Department of Trade and Industry said later that Britain would meet its share, some 4 per cent of the total.

It remains to be seen whether Mr Brittan's appeal met with more success in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, the leading tin producers.

Bankers will be disappointed with the EEC's apparent lack of urgency. The 16 financial institutions which have lent more than £200m (\$432m) to the ITC, have set a deadline of Friday for the council to come up with a positive response to their demands for more government cash for the ITC and guarantees for its borrowings.

Sir Adam Ridley, the lenders' spokesman and a director of Hambros Bank, said: "Time is of the essence." The ITC's actions had raised the very wide question of the trust bankers could place in any sovereign government in its role as guarantor of any body such as the ITC, he said.

Meanwhile at the LME, Mr Jacques Lion, the board chairman, said that the tin market, which has been suspended for the rest of this week at least, should not reopen until arrangements have been met to discharge the ITC's debts.

Letters, Page 19; Details, Page 34

## Sainsbury profits rise 23%

BY LISA WOOD IN LONDON

BRITAIN'S biggest food and drink retailer, J. Sainsbury, yesterday showed it was maintaining its grip on the British grocery business in announcing a 23% increase in interim profits.

In the fiercely competitive grocery retailing business, Sainsbury reported pre-tax profits of £92.4m (\$133m) for the 26 weeks to October 5, compared with £75.1m for the same period last year.

The interim dividend is 1.65p per share against 1.4p for the first half last year, an increase of 17.9 per cent.

The interim result drove up the group's share price on the London Stock Exchange to a closing high for 1985 of 364p, up 6p on the day. During trading it had hit 372p.

The group's 274 food stores accounted for the bulk of turnover, contributing £1.78bn to total group sales up 14.9 per cent at £1.8bn (including VAT payments of £82.5m).

Other businesses include the Homebase Do It Yourself (DIY) chain and the six SaveCentre hypermarkets jointly owned with British Home Stores.

Sales volume growth in the supermarket was more than 9 per cent with new stores accounting for a substantial part of this. In the current financial year five large stores have been opened as part of the group's capital investment programme. The group spent £246m in the last half year and is expected to exceed this in real terms this year.

The group, recording a net margin of 4.85 per cent, said its prices had remained highly competitive and there had been further gains in productivity.

Sainsbury, like Marks & Spencer, has been highly innovative in what marketing men call "added value" products such as convenience foods. The chain, which launches 350 new products a year, has this year extended distribution of products such as its Vintage Wine selection, an area in which it has attacked the specialist off-licences.

Increased productivity comes in part from larger stores as well as what it calls improved working practices.

Sainsbury's 26 Homebase stores, which cater for the DIY and garden centre market, reported sales up 45 per cent to £48.6m with profits increasing from £0.3m to £1.5m. Three new stores were opened in the half year.

Sainsbury supports relaxation of Sunday trading laws for DIY and what it calls "leisure centres" although the group is a little more reticent on Sunday opening for food stores.

The group's associated companies contributed £7.2m to interim pre-tax profits.

Lex, Page 29; Details, Page 26

## France to introduce fresh monetary policies

By David Marsh in Paris

THE FRENCH Government is to base its monetary policy next year on a wider definition of the money supply to keep pace with growing financial innovation in the economy.

The move, announced yesterday by Mr Pierre Bergeyrov, the Finance Minister, also prepares the ground for controlling credit growth more by interest rates and less by the traditional French method of credit ceilings.

Money supply targets, up to now set for M2 - cash in circulation plus French residents' sight and deposit accounts - will for 1986 be defined according to a wider aggregate, M3. This will include deposits held with the large, state-controlled savings bank network as well as placements with France's rapidly expanding unit trusts and mutual funds.

In line with the Government's intention of keeping up a tight credit policy into the 1986 election year, the M3 growth target for next year is expected to be in the 3 to 5 per cent range, below the forecast 1986 expansion of about 6 per cent in nominal gross national product.

The actual M3 targets will be announced in a few weeks. This year's 4 to 6 per cent growth rate target for M2 has been exceeded slightly. This reflects both relatively buoyant bank lending for consumer goods purchases and home-buying and also modest inflows of foreign exchange into France this year.

The Finance Ministry and the Bank of France have already in practice been widening the net of monetary policy because of the expansion of credit and liquidity into instruments not covered by M2. Although monetary policy will be cast in terms of M3, from next year the authorities will also be monitoring redefined narrower aggregates M1 and M2 as well as a wider measure of liquidity, L.

The redefining of monetary definitions is designed to allow the Bank of France the possibility of controlling credit through influencing bank reserves and through an "open market" policy of sales and purchases of government debt. Partly because of uncertainties connected with general elections next March, however, officials have made clear that there will be no sweeping changes next year in the present control system which relies heavily on quantitative limits on individual banks' lending.

Mr Bergeyrov also announced yesterday more details of two financing innovations being introduced as part of gradual moves to

## Continued on Page 20

## Jaruzelski set to assume presidency

BY CHRISTOPHER BOBINSKI IN WARSAW

GENERAL Wojciech Jaruzelski, Poland's Communist party chief, is today expected to relinquish his post of Prime Minister to become head of the Council of State, or President.

The move, which should be approved by the newly appointed Parliament today, is seen to reflect the General's belief that Poland has returned to normal after the upheavals of the Solidarity free trade union in the early 1980s.

It will not mean any diminution of General Jaruzelski's power since the largely ceremonial Council of State will be strengthened and will acquire strategic decision-making authority as enjoyed by the Government.

Observers believe General Jaruzelski wants to upgrade the presidency and reduce the collective role of Ministers to an executive "Cabinet" rather than the French model. The changes will permit General Jaruzelski to relinquish direct responsibility for the day-to-day running of the country's economy. Coupled with his post of party chief, General Jaruzelski's new job will mean he will be able to retain effective political control of Poland.

The present three-year economic plan, drawn up in 1982 to stabilise the country after a decline in the previous year, comes to an end next month. That should enable the General to transfer strategic economy decisions to the Council of State. He will be taking Mr Kazimierz Barcikowski, presently the party's economic overlord, to the Council of State as his deputy.

A new Prime Minister is expected to be named today. He will then present a new Cabinet to Parliament for approval during next week.

The reshuffle represents the widest set of government changes since the introduction of martial law in 1982. It precedes the Polish party congress, which will take place early next year and during which General Jaruzelski is expected to consolidate the changes.

The moves also come after parliamentary elections last month, the first since martial law during which over two thirds of the electorate went to the polls despite a boycott call by Solidarity.

Mr Jerzy Urban, the government press spokesman, yesterday denied that a 19-year-old student from Olstyn in northern Poland died as a result of a beating by police after being detained on October 19.

The police have maintained that Mr Marcin Antonowicz threw himself from a police lorry after being arrested for drunken behaviour. Mr Urban said the "tragic" incident had been exploited by "political hyenas" in the Western press.

## British Telecom to buy IBM computers

BY GUY DE JONQUIERES IN LONDON

BRITISH TELECOM is turning to IBM of the US and other companies making computers designed to work with IBM equipment for most of the computer systems it plans to install. That is part of a far-reaching modernisation of its customer service operations.

The decision marks a shift in procurement policy by BT, which has traditionally relied heavily on equipment manufactured by ICL, the only British-owned mainframe computer maker.

Senior BT managers have criticised ICL's past performance and wanted at one point to exclude the company completely from the latest project.

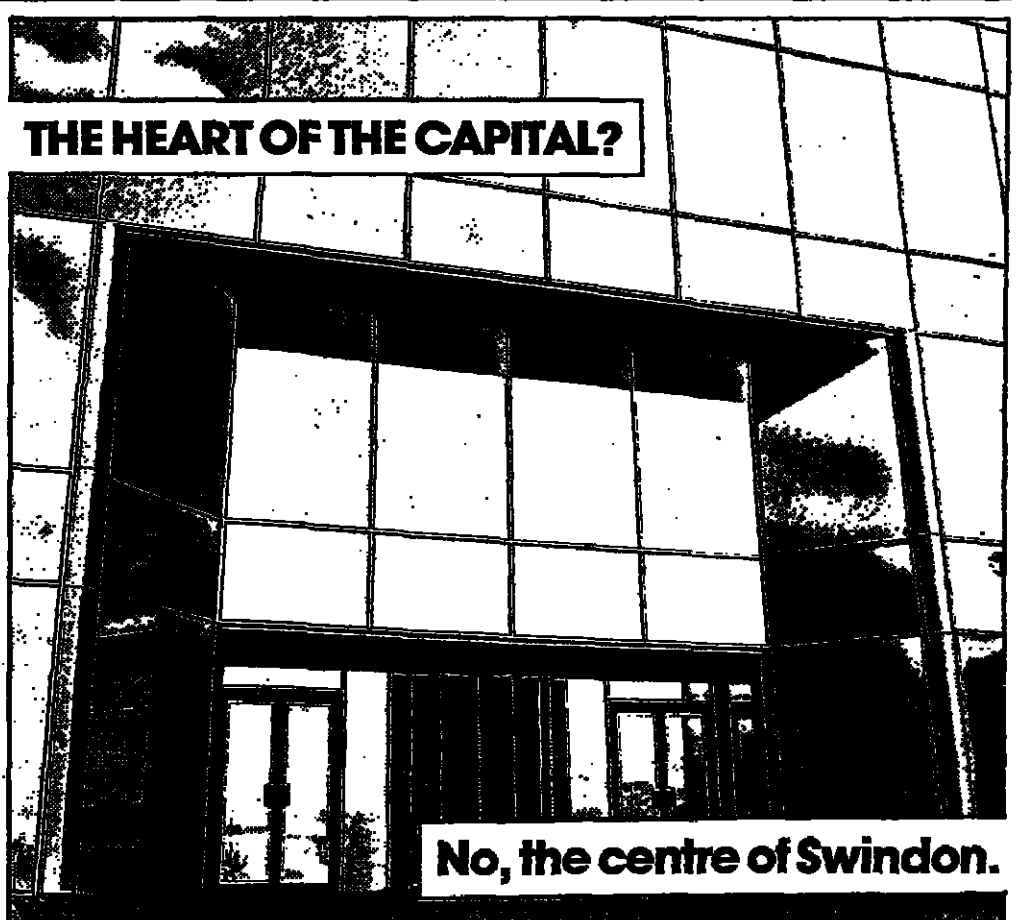
Instead, BT announced yesterday that ICL would be awarded orders for seven of the 30 computer systems it plans to buy. The rest of the computers will be bought from IBM and other companies whose computers are "plug-compatible" with IBM equipment.

BT's computerisation programme, known as Customer Service System (CSS) is one of the largest in progress in Western Europe. It is due to be completed by 1990 and involves investments estimated at more than £200m (\$288m).

The ICL order, worth more than £50m, is for seven Series 39 mainframe computers and about 5,000 terminals. The Series 39, which was launched this year and was developed in collaboration with Fujitsu of Japan, is ICL's most powerful machine.

Mr Alan Roussel, managing director of ICL's UK business, said the order, the largest yet for Series 39 machines, was "the best news of

## Continued on Page 20



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## EUROPEAN NEWS

## Greens plan to buy Austrian N-plant

By Patrick Blum in Vienna

A GROUP of Austrian greens and artists is raising money to buy the unused Zwentendorf nuclear power plant to turn it into an international ecology, peace and cultural centre.

The group, calling itself Initiative Oesterreich 2025, says it will raise the money by issuing legal certificates of Sch 100 (£3.50), Sch 500 and Sch 1,000.

Mr Gerhard Heilingbrunner, a spokesman for the group, admitted yesterday that it did not hope to raise anything like the estimated Sch 14bn invested in building and maintaining the plant.

"The costs of the plant have already been written off through taxes," he said. The group would be making a symbolic offer depending on how much it was able to raise. This could be up to Sch 10m, a fraction of the original costs, Mr Heilingbrunner said.

The certificates will be on sale until January 1987 but Initiative Oesterreich hopes to start discussions with the plant's owners early next year.

Zwentendorf, Austria's only nuclear power plant, stands silent and grey on the banks of the Danube some 40 km west of Vienna. It was completed in 1978 but has remained unused after a referendum the same year came out narrowly against commissioning it.

Numerous attempts to overcome political and constitutional obstacles to reverse that decision have failed. In desperation the plant's management company decided in July to pursue offers by international companies for its disposal.

The national electricity utility company which owns a majority shareholding in the plant was sceptical yesterday about Initiative Oesterreich's offer. "We have heard about this with some interest."

However, if the equipment was sold off, there would be no reason for not selling the empty building, he added. The artists supporting the initiative include Mr Friedensreich Hundertwasser, the celebrated and controversial Austrian painter, who has also campaigned against plans to build a hydro-electric power plant on the Danube.

David Marsh reports on a new industrial future for a depressed French town  
Robots breathe life into Saint Etienne

THE CITY of Saint Etienne, in south-eastern France, badly hit by the run down in steel and engineering over the last decade, is turning to robots for help in building a new industrial future.

At the recent opening of a robotics training centre on the site of a disused steelworks, a burly Swedish robot with a long orange arm, made by the Asca engineering group, waved flags enthusiastically. A smaller French welding robot helped Mr Francois Dubanchet, the mayor of Saint Etienne, to cut the traditional tricolour ribbon at the inauguration ceremony.

One of the local politicians participating in the lengthy opening speeches claimed that La Productique (coined by the French to describe the technology of flexible manufacturing systems) was "a word resounding with hope for the future."

Behind the rhetoric is the realisation that France has no alternative but to take robotics seriously. Mr Victor Marino, director of the local engineering college, one of the three organisations taking part in the project, summed up the issues at stake: "If we fail in improving flexibility of production systems, there will be immense problems not only in Saint Etienne but in the whole of France."

Saint Etienne already has plenty of experience in facing up to difficulties. The city and its outskirts are pock-marked by closed mines and factories. One

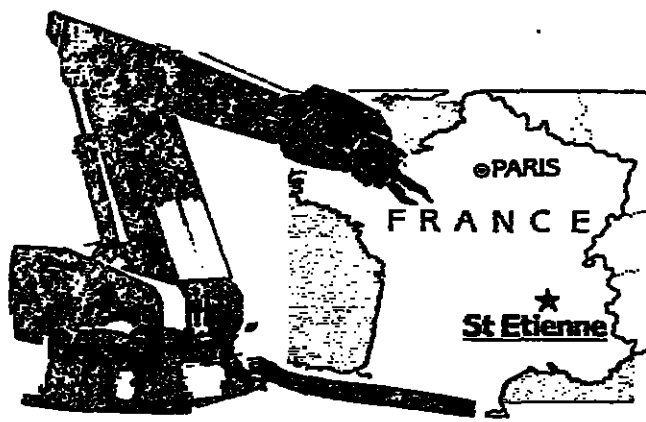
of Saint Etienne's most famous symbols, the sprawling works of the Manufacture small arms group, lies barred and deserted. The failure of a workers' co-operative this summer ended a ten-year fight against financial adversity to keep the factory alive.

As in many of Europe's depressed industrial regions, the city's official unemployment rate of 19 per cent would be much higher if the figures counted the large numbers of former steel and metalworkers brought into early retirement.

The setting up of the Maison de la Productique may be an encouraging step, but it holds out only slim chances of any rapid transformation in the area's fortunes. The new blue and white building graces wasteland on which steelworks were first built in 1854. After successive ownerships, including the now-bankrupt Creusot Loir group, the site became vacant in 1981-83.

It is now the focus of FF 55m (£4.6m) investment scheme to build a high-technology industrial zone which will probably take a generation to bear fruit. About 25 per cent of the money is being put up by the state as part of government efforts to revitalise hard hit areas in "industrial conversion zones" around the country.

The rest of the cash is coming from a mixture of regional and local authorities. Mr Dubanchet, a combative senator from the



centre-right UDF/CDS group, who snatched power from the previous Communist mayor in 1983, says with satisfaction that Saint Etienne won the battle to host the robot centre against half a dozen rival towns in the region, including Lyons and Grenoble.

About 40 engineers, researchers and technicians will work at the centre, to bring local companies into closer contact with automated manufacturing systems and improve existing techniques. An impressive battery of robot manipulators and sophisticated machine tools have been bought, begged and borrowed to help demonstrate new technology.

The Maison de la Productique will host training courses for employees from the Rhone Alpes region and grant companies assistance on specific technical problems. It has already given advice on factory automation to companies manufacturing products ranging from ski-shoes and optical lenses to cardboard boxes, tiles and cigarettes.

Our role is to spread the gospel," says Mr Michel Barba, president of the state Adepa agency charged with developing robotics, which is taking part in the Saint Etienne scheme.

The most optimistic estimates give the high-tech industrial "park" around the training centre about 10 years to develop. Nine small companies in areas such as micro-electronics and software are already installed in a three-story building on the site. The number is expected to grow to 25 as new buildings are added over the next few years.

As a sign of efforts to encourage small business start-ups from the scientific community, the prestigious Ecole des Mines engineers' school in Saint Etienne launched a scheme this summer to aid would-be entrepreneurs to commercialise ideas developed in the laboratory.

M. Pierre Lesbats, the school's research director, says four business projects are under study in areas such as electronics or biotechnology which could benefit from assistance worth FF 300,000 a year.

M. Christian Cabal, the city official presiding over Saint Etienne's high-tech aspirations, is negotiating with IBM over a plan for the computer group to set up a training centre on the new industrial site. He also hopes the Thomson-CGE group will set up a software centre in the city.

However, such plans will do little to improve the outlook for workers laid off in traditional industries like the local Soma subsidiary of the Valco vehicle components group which has just announced large redundancies.

"A lot of these people are difficult to re-utilise," admits M. Cabal. "Even with training, it is asking a lot to expect them to move across to robotics or software research."

## EEC report sours relations with Turkey further

BY DAVID BARCHARD IN ANKARA

AMBASSADORS of European Community nations in Ankara are giving a dinner for local journalists today in an attempt to improve relations with the Turkish press. It is not yet clear if the EEC's own representative in Ankara, Mr Gwyn Morgan, will attend.

He is outside Turkey after a storm in the Turkish press in which he has been accused of being "a viper in the Turkish bosom." Turkish journalists who will be guests at today's dinner have spent the past two weeks clamouring for his expulsion.

A report adopted some days ago by the European Parliament criticising Turkey over human rights lies at the heart of the row.

The Turkish press accuses Mr Morgan of writing the report which dashed hopes of an early rapprochement with the Community. What seems to have happened is that his dispatches relating the confidential and unattributed opinions of Community ambassadors in Ankara were handed to a Turkish diplomat by an Ulster Unionist MEP, Mr John Taylor.

Mr Taylor last week told journalists that after he received the confidential Community document by mistake he passed it straight to the Turkish ambassador. He claims he was redirecting the documents to their original destination via the Turkish authorities.

The views of the ambassadors are likely to have ranged from those of embassies such as the Dutch and British which take an optimistic view of the Turkish situation to those of the Greeks which are less likely to have been favourable.

Extracts printed in the Turkish newspapers refer to "the junta" and use other terms which Turks consider offensive.

The report adopted by the European Parliament was drawn up by a committee of MEPs headed by the British Socialist, Mr Richard Balfe. The Turkish Government refused all contact with the committee, as a result of which families were provided by the EEC's office in Ankara.

The Parliament is urged in the report not to reactivate its relations with Turkey at present. The committee said there

had been some progress on human rights but it had severe misgivings about torture allegations, unduly lengthy trials of civilians before military tribunals, and curbs on trade union activity. About eight British Conservative MEPs broke ranks to vote in favour of the report.

It is thought unlikely here that Mr Morgan would actually be expelled if he returns. But the 55-year-old diplomat has previously faced a run threat and is known to be unhappy at the limited security provided for him.

Quentin Peel adds from Brussels: The political row over Mr Morgan's letter comes at a time when relations between Turkey and the EEC are admitted to be "extremely tense," according to Brussels officials.

The most immediate problem concerns strict limits imposed by the Community on Turkish textile exports, especially T-shirts, after the collapse of negotiations in September for voluntary curbs.

However, looming over the relationship is the problem of free movement of Turkish workers, which has been promised by the EEC to come into effect in December, 1986. That undertaking was given in the 20-year-old association agreement with Turkey, but the Ten, led by West Germany, are desperate to renegotiate the clause to maintain some limit on the flow of Turkish migrant workers.

## FINANCIAL TIMES

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## Cavaco Silva takes over in Portugal

BY DIANA SMITH IN LISBON



PORTUGAL'S Social Democrat Government, headed by Professor Anibal Cavaco Silva, takes office here today. A strongly technocratic administration, it is expected to refit the depressed economy rapidly, cutting interest rates and reducing personal and company taxes, and giving special attention to agriculture. The backwardness of the latter compels Portugal to import more than half its foodstuffs each year.

The industrial north, hub of private enterprise, is strongly represented in the new Government through two prominent Oporto figures: Mr Miguel Cadilhe, the Finance Minister,

and Prof. Luis Valente de Oliveira, the Planning and Territorial Administration Minister was largely responsible for the preparation of the Government's expansionist programme.

Meanwhile, Mr Victor Constancia, the governor of the Bank of Portugal, and Mr Ernani Lopes, the outgoing Finance Minister, who had the uncomfortable task of imposing two years of austerity to correct the Social Democrats' excessive expansion in 1980-82, have warned that refit must be moderate. Portugal cannot afford another bout of uncontrolled current account deficits and foreign borrowing, they say.

With only 88 of the 250 seats

in Parliament, the new administration's survival will depend on its ability to weather strong opposition from the Socialists and Communists. It will need to negotiate tactical support from the Christian Democrats or the centre-left Democratic Renewal Party which supports the outgoing President, General Antonio Ramalho Eanes.

Until the outcome is known of the presidential election in mid-January, when the Social Democrats plan to support the conservative candidate Professor Diogo Freitas do Amaral, the Government cannot be sure of its long term durability. A victorious Socialist or other left-wing candidate is likely to call another snap general election in the spring.

## Ten drown as ship capsizes

By Fay Gjester in Oslo

TEN PEOPLE are missing, presumed drowned, after an oil platform - construction ship capsized in the middle of a Norwegian fjord on Monday evening. Most were probably working inside a heavy container fastened to the ship's deck, which is believed to have fallen to the bottom of the fjord when the vessel overturned.

Twelve other workers on board were thrown into the water, and rescued soon afterwards. None of them was seriously injured.

The ship, Concem, is a former bulk carrier, put down, stripped of its machinery and converted to serve as a platform for mixing concrete. It was moored in the Gandsfjord, near Stavanger.



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## EUROPEAN NEWS

### West German unemployment total declines

BY JOHN DAVIES IN FRANKFURT

WEST GERMAN unemployment eased slightly last month but remains a headache for the Bonn Government despite its optimism about the economy.

The number of people registered as out of work edged down from 2,151,560 to 2,148,800 or 8.6 per cent of the labour force, according to the Federal Labour Office. It is the third month in succession that unemployment has improved, although the total is still slightly higher than a year ago.

Unemployment has been above the politically embarrassing level of 2m for exactly three years.

The Government is fairly confident that the continued economic recovery will reduce unemployment further before the federal elections due early in 1987. But a hard core of unemployment is attributed to structural problems in some industries and some regions. Few experts see an easy or quick solution to this.

In some ways the jobs market has obviously improved. With production picking up, jobs have been created, offsetting an increase in the labour force.

### Cashless shopping system to expand next year

BY LESLIE COLTITT IN BERLIN

WEST GERMANY'S first cashless shopping experiment is to be greatly expanded next year in West Berlin and Munich, according to its initiator, the Berliner Bank. The system, called e-kasse, uses the ubiquitous Eurocheque card issued by banks in some 20 European countries.

The customer keys in the personal identification number of his Eurocheque card which is passed through a reading device. Within 30 seconds funds are transferred from the cardholder's account to that of the retailer.

The "banking point-of-sale" experiment began last December after Berliner Bank, which is mainly city-owned, joined with banks in Munich to launch e-kasse. The experiment has

### Bonn hopes privatisation will raise DM 2bn

THE WEST GERMAN Government expects income of DM 2bn (\$788m) in the next two years from privatisation of state-owned companies, according to Mr Gerhard Stoltenberg, Finance Minister, Reuter reports from Bonn.

In an interview with the newspaper Schleswig-Holsteinische Landeszeitung, he said income for next year was projected at DM 400m and the rest was expected in 1987.

He did not rule out privatisation of Salzgitter, the steel and engineering group, in the next legislative period beginning early in 1987. Salzgitter is expected to break even next year after heavy losses.

The Government officially plans to privatisise six companies, including Lufthansa, the national airline, before the end of the present Parliament.

The Government said only aluminium, chemicals and energy group VIAG and Praxia-Steinbock, an energy exploration company, were expected to be privatised next year. Bonn will cut its 87.4 per cent stake in VIAG by at least a quarter and have the company listed on a bourse.

The Government's plans for Praxia-Steinbock, in which it has a direct 95 per cent stake, are less clear but it will initially retain a substantial holding.

Mr Stoltenberg's aim of reducing Bonn's 74.3 per cent direct stake in Lufthansa to about 55 per cent has so far been blocked by Mr Franz Josef Strauss, the Bavarian premier and leader of the Christian Social Union Party in the centre-right coalition. Any progress on the issue will require top-level coalition talks which have yet to be scheduled, the Government said.

Other government sources said revenue from next year's moves would not reduce Bonn's 1986 new net borrowing target of DM 25bn—unchanged from this year—because coal subsidies would have to be increased as a result of the dollar's sharp drop since the 1986 budget was drafted.

The subsidies are paid to steel makers to compensate them for the extra cost of buying German coking coal, as they are obliged to do under an agreement with the coal company Ruhrkohle, rather than cheaper coal from the world market.

The dollar's fall has made the gap between West German and world prices bigger than initially expected

### Eureka consensus on need for state help

BY RUPERT CORNWELL IN HANOVER

MINISTERS FROM 18 countries yesterday attempted to put aside differences over the organisation of Eureka and accepted the need for state finance, if required, to back individual projects in the fledgling scheme for West European high technology co-operation.

At the same time, plans were being finalised for the formal endorsement of several specific projects, which will set Eureka rolling in earnest. France last night submitted five schemes, involving government support, on which work can start at once. Others are expected today.

They include ventures in the fields of computers, lasers, the environment and space, despite the political momentum clearly gathering behind the idea, the foreign and technology ministers here were still struggling to dispel widespread scepticism, not least in West Germany itself, that Eureka really will give new impetus to Europe's efforts to keep technologically abreast of the US and Japan.

All participants, including

Britain which hitherto has been the most dogmatic advocate of market forces, now recognise that some state aid may be needed for projects, particularly those of a longer-term and riskier nature. But none, with the possible exception of France, yet seems ready to allot extra public funds beyond those in existing national research and development programmes.

In his opening address here to the ministerial conference—the second of its kind after Eureka's political launch in Paris in July—Chancellor Helmut Kohl declared Bonn's readiness to provide state support for individual projects.

"This is also necessary to give European companies a fair chance in competition with their foreign counterparts, who have the benefit of generous state sponsored programmes." But, he insisted, "we feel it is basically up to companies to finance their own ventures."

The Hanover gathering is essentially to settle the struc-

ture of the Eureka scheme and establish a framework within which promising projects can move ahead. A key ingredient is the removal of trade barriers in Europe. "A genuine common market (which the EEC hopes to create by 1992) will be crucial to the success of closer technological co-operation," Mr Kohl declared.

Although Eureka also embraces six countries outside the recently enlarged EEC, the Chancellor emphasised that the scheme should not bypass existing Community structures, such as the Esprit programme, but be complementary to them.

However, the issue of precisely how Eureka and the EEC will interlock—as well as that of what agency, if any, should co-ordinate it—remained unclear last night.

Few here doubt that some unit, or "task force" as British officials now call it, will emerge to act as a clearing house for Eureka schemes. But the Benelux countries, as well as Italy,

want it to have the authority to guarantee real "transparency" and to keep all potential partners informed of what projects are in hand. They also want it to be linked to the Commission in Brussels.

Larger countries, like West Germany and the UK, are keen to keep any central agency as small as possible, and shy away from the notion of a full scale secretariat. Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British Foreign Secretary, said that most countries favoured a "flexible approach," while recognising the fears among smaller and less advanced countries of being left out.

The likelihood last night was that despite the pressure for speedy agreement of the secretariat problem, it would in practice be left open here to be settled in time for the third ministerial conference on Eureka, due in London next May.

In the meantime, Britain is pressing its idea of industrial

forums, or workshops, within which interested companies can develop Eureka projects. One such, called PENSA, covering local area computer networks, will be examined for a second time in London this December by 18 companies from West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, France and the UK.

In all, some 300 projects have been tabled here. But only a few belong to the so-called Category One, ready for immediate go-ahead, and where a memorandum of agreement exists among participating companies and where governments have given their blessing.

A further 60 or so are in Category Two, where industrial contacts have taken place but no solid agreements reached. The remainder of the 300 constitute merely a "wish list" of future collaboration possibilities. Many, officials say, have been tabled mainly so that their sponsors are not excluded from a related scheme being hatched

### Tickets for Chinese get-together prove hard to sell

BY QUENTIN PEEL IN BRUSSELS

AN URGENT appeal went out yesterday from the corridors of the European Commission in Brussels: find us the missing exporters. Some 25,000 glossy invitations have been sent out to businessmen throughout the Community, urging them to spend Ecu 1,000 (£590) a head to attend a high-powered business week with a 180-strong delegation from China armed with hundreds of proposals for joint ventures.

So far, only 120 companies have said they will come,

leaving the EEC ranks in danger of being outnumbered by their Chinese counterparts. Now the Commission has launched a new effort to attract potential exporters to the event, especially from France and West Germany where they have been slowest to come forward.

"They are not coming here for sightseeing," said Mr Louis Kawan, the European Commission director responsible for relations with China. "These people intend

to do business. They will only do business with people they know, and they are hoping to visit European factories after the event."

The Chinese delegation is being headed by Zhang Jinfu, state councillor in the Chinese Government, and Jir Chai, vice minister responsible for foreign economic relations and trade. The rest of the party includes technical experts from several Chinese provinces, such as Hunan,

Hubei, Liaoning and Jiang Su.

Mr Kawan said that only 30 of the members of the group had booked return flights to China, in the expectation that they would be able to follow up the business week, from December 2 to 7, with individual factory visits. They would be coming with a list of more than 250 investment and technology transfer projects to negotiate.

The most interesting area for European involvement

was in modernising small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises, he said. A key part of the business week—the second such event organised by the Commission in five years—was to provide plenty of opportunity for informal contacts, with time set aside for frequent coffee breaks and cocktails.

As for the expense of the occasion, he said: "Any business which cannot afford Ecu 1,000 to attend, cannot hope to do business in China."

### Record budget deficit forecast for Ireland

BY HUGH CARNERY IN DUBLIN

IRELAND is heading for a budget deficit of more than 8 per cent of gross national product this year, the highest ever, the Bank of Ireland reports today.

The resulting surge in government borrowing needs must be countered by rigorous spending cuts or debt charges could become intolerable.

In its latest quarterly bulletin, the central bank says the budget deficit in the first nine months of this year reached £1,089m (£593m), more than

88 per cent of the estimate for the year. Less than forecast VAT receipts and higher than expected wage increases are the main culprits.

The government borrowing requirement for 1986 is set to exceed the target of just over £2bn. It will equal more than 13 per cent of GNP compared to 12.4 per cent in 1984. The total national debt approaches £17bn, nearly half of which is made up of external debt.

The bank says external debt

charges—£800m in interest and £191m in principal this year—are "a major impediment to employment prospects."

The report comes as the Government faces a major battle over public sector pay. The unions have already staged one successful one-day national stoppage in their campaign to break government pay targets expected to be around 3 per cent.

The Bank of Ireland says spending cuts, not tax increases,

are the only way to curb the deficit and it adds that improved tax collection promised by the Government would only have marginal effects on the deficit.

The bank says the inflation rate is likely to fall to 5.5 per cent this year and the current account deficit will decline to £550m from £587m last year. But GNP growth for 1986 has been revised down to 1.1 per cent from 1.5 per cent with unemployment, the highest in the EEC, averaging 17.5 per cent for the year.

### Yugoslavia back in the black

YUGOSLAVIA'S balance of payments improved markedly during this year's first nine months, buoyed by earnings from tourism services and other invisible trade. National Bank figures showed yesterday.

They show Yugoslavia's current account was in the black by \$388m (£277m), compared with a \$77m deficit from January to July.

But the country's trade deficit—widened to \$1.26bn at the end of October.

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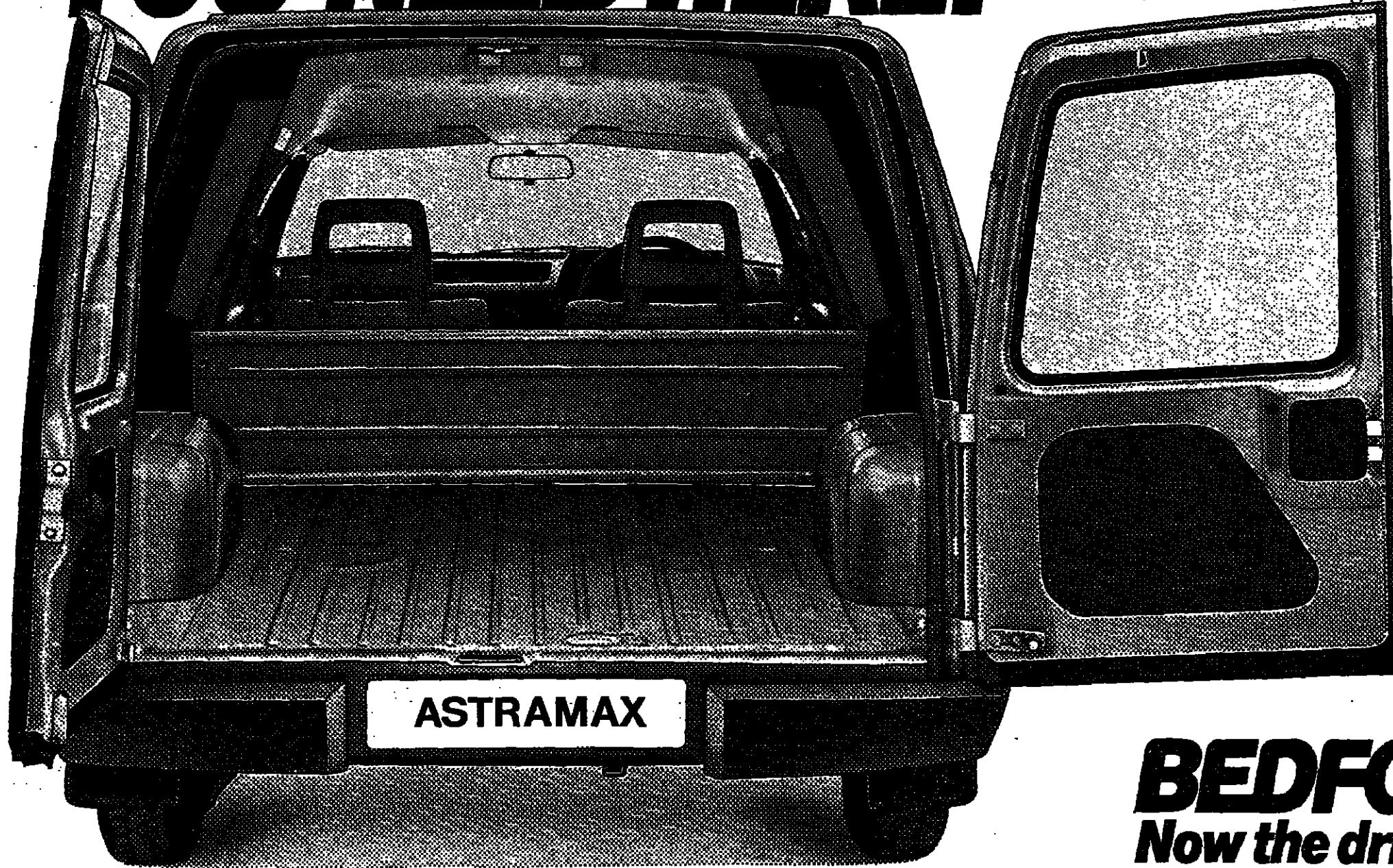
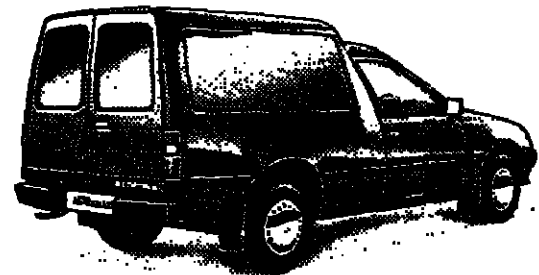
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## EUROPEAN NEWS

## Companies urged to join SDI

BY PETER MARSH

COMPANIES from Western Europe should get involved in the US Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) not just to seek quick profits, but also to keep up with the latest in exotic technology, Dr Julian Davidson, a leading US defence expert, said in London yesterday.

Dr Davidson, who is responsible for strategic defence activities at Booz, Allen and Hamilton, a US company of consultants, told a Financial Times conference on SDI and Eureka that participation in the programme could help European companies gain insights into a range of technologies such as computers, optics and materials.

In many cases, says Dr Davidson, the research could find other military and commercial applications unconnected with the Star Wars goal of designing a defensive shield to screen the West from Soviet missiles.

European companies should try several different approaches to participating in the project, said Dr Davidson, who formerly worked for the US Army on defences against ballistic missiles and whose company is helping define the basic shape of an operational Star Wars system.

One avenue would be to arrange joint ventures with US contractors already working on Star Wars. Another technique could be to send employees for limited periods to US Government weapons laboratories, such as Los Alamos, where they

### FINANCIAL TIMES SDI and Eureka CONFERENCE

could gain access to ideas on novel SDI approaches.

Mr Earle Williams, president of BDM International, a US defence systems company, said European companies seeking contracts under the SDI would face strong competition from American military equipment contractors.

He said, however, that Western Europe has expertise in areas such as electro-optical devices, which could form the building blocks of new, fast optical computers, artificial intelligence and super-computers. Western Europe also has skills in lasers, rocket propulsion satellites, high-energy accelerators and metals research.

Mr Williams said the Star Wars programme, on which the US plans to spend \$33bn by 1990, would provide technical advances to benefit conventional military systems.

For instance, techniques to defend cities from short-range nuclear weapons, such as those fired from submarines, could have an impact on developments in anti-aircraft weapons, armour for tanks and other

vehicles and new weapons systems for aircraft and ships.

The SDI techniques of relevance to these areas would include new satellite surveillance systems and novel forms of missiles that are fired by chemical rockets and guided by their own microscopic sensing devices, Mr Williams said.

Mr Michael Clark, deputy chairman of Plessey, told the conference he supports the idea of a strategic defence against nuclear weapons. He said future wars are probably inevitable and that he would rather see them fought in outer space, with the battles involving devices such as laser weapons and battle-management satellites, than on the ground.

Mr Jean-Louis Gergorin, senior vice president for corporate strategy at Matra, the French aerospace and defence company, said he would like to see Western Europe start its own military-oriented research programme that would be separate from both the SDI and Eureka, the proposed pan-European research project expected to concentrate on civilian technologies.

Mr Gergorin said the research programme could encompass microelectronics, advanced sensors, image analysis, military computers and software. Other activities could involve exotic weapons such as guns which accelerate small pellets with homing sensors by using electromagnetic forces produced by giant pulses of electricity.

Mr John Holt, managing director of the space and communications division of British Aerospace, said any company interested in innovation would want to participate in both the SDI and Eureka.

Participation, however, posed some problems, Mr Holt said. For instance, it consumes manpower in projects where commercial successes are not guaranteed.

It also means sharing company expertise with other groups. That has given rise to the fear that companies could lose rights to commercialising new ideas by giving away their secrets to competitors.

Eureka, said Mr Holt, should aim at tangible goals and be the result of market pull rather than technology push. He reminded the audience that British Aerospace was as well equipped as any company to join such collaborative programmes. It has agreements in the area of aircraft, weapons and space technology with 25 companies in 17 countries.

Dr Raffaele Palieri, managing director of Telettra, the Italian telecommunications company, said that the Eureka project should be organised to complement the Star Wars programme and not to oppose it.

"The advantages for industry from the programme are lower risks attached to long term investment, enlargement of the market and generally improved competitiveness," said Dr Palieri.

## Egypt holds 'positive talks' with PLO

By Tony Walker in Cairo

EGYPT EXPECTED A "positive result" from its discussions with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, President Hosni Mubarak's senior adviser said yesterday after the first round of talks with a delegation led by Mr Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman.

Dr Osama al-Baz, head of Mr Mubarak's political office, described the two hours of private talks between the Egyptian President and Mr Arafat - and a subsequent meeting between respective delegations - as positive, fruitful and satisfactory.

Mr Arafat, who is making his first state visit to Cairo since November, 1977 - just before the late President Anwar Sadat went to Jerusalem to make peace with Israel - has been accorded a subdued welcome in Egypt, reflecting Egyptian dismay at recent PLO guerrilla activities such as the hijacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro, which has slowed Middle East peace efforts.

King Hussein of Jordan, renewing his call for an international conference on the Middle East, yesterday reaffirmed his belief that the PLO should take part in any serious peace talks, Reuters reports from Luxembourg.

## Indonesia sacks hundreds of oil workers

HUNDREDS of oil workers

in Indonesia have been sacked for allegedly being associated at one time with the now banned Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI, Kieran Cook reports from Jakarta. The state oil company, Pertamina, said it had sacked the workers on the orders of military intelligence. It did not say exactly how many had been sacked but \$37 have been told to leave one company alone - Caltex, the biggest foreign oil company working in Indonesia.

Pertamina said the Government wanted to remove all people from what it called vital industries who might once have been associated with the PKI. The present Government blames the PKI for an attempted coup in Indonesia in 1965.

All the sacked oil workers are said at one time to have been members of the PKI, an association with the PKI.

### Sri Lankan deficit

A steep rise in defence spending and depressed commodity prices have produced a record 30bn Sri Lankan rupees (\$773m) deficit in the 1985 budget, Mervyn de Silva reports from Colombo.

In the Appropriation Bill presented yesterday by Mr Ronnie de Mel, the Finance Minister, the defence vote is Rs 5.5bn as against Rs 2.7bn for the Mahaveli River development project and Rs 3.6bn for education. Last year's defence vote was less than Rs 3bn.

### Loan for Zaïre

The World Bank will lend Zaïre \$550m between 1986 and 1988, the bank's permanent representative in Kinshasa told Reuters. He said the sum included \$300m from the International Development Association and \$150m from the special fund launched by the World Bank for sub-Saharan Africa earlier this year.

### Taiwan relaxes curbs

THE Central Bank of Taiwan has relaxed its foreign exchange controls by allowing local and foreign individuals to participate in forward foreign exchange transactions, a bank official said, Reuters reports from Taipei. He said the move would help ease the pressure of rising foreign currency reserves, which total a record \$20.5bn. It would also stimulate the local spot foreign exchange market.

### S. Korea trade surplus

South Korea expects a trade surplus of \$600m next year despite a \$1.1bn deficit in 1984 and a smaller shortfall this year, Mr Kim Jin-Ho, Trade Minister, said in a report to President Chun Doo Hwan, Reuters writes from Seoul. The Government hopes to keep this year's trade deficit to \$300m.

### New Zealand budget

New Zealand's budget deficit rose 34.9 per cent to NZ\$2.1bn (\$327m) for the first six months of fiscal 1985-86 ending March against NZ\$1.5bn in the same 1984 period, government accounts show, Reuters reports from Wellington.

## Boesak's passport withdrawn as court is overruled

BY ANTHONY ROBINSON IN JOHANNESBURG

MR STOFFEL BOTHA, the South African Minister for Home Affairs, yesterday withdrew the passport of the Rev Allan Boesak, patron of the anti-apartheid United Democratic Front (UDF), in a move which virtually negated an earlier court decision to relax his bail conditions.

A provincial Cape court restored Mr Boesak's passport on Monday, part of a relaxation in bail terms which reduced the conditions of his bail from ten to three. Mr Boesak was arrested on August 26 for planning a march on Pollsmoor jail in support of jailed African National Congress (ANC) leader Mr Nelson Mandela, and released a month later on strict bail terms.

Mr Boesak described the move as an act of petty vindictiveness and another sign that the Government has no respect for the court or the rule of law. He was due to fly to the U.S. to receive the Robert Kennedy Humanitarian Award later this month but his wife is now expected to represent him instead.

Meanwhile, the police have begun investigating a possible charge of contravening the internal security acts against the Cape Times which on Monday published a lengthy interview with Mr Oliver Tambo, leader of the African National Congress in exile. Mr Tambo is

South Africa's financial rand continued to bear the brunt of foreign investors' lack of confidence as the restricted currency traded close to its new low level of 23.75 US cents yesterday before slipping to 23.50 cents. The market remains highly sensitive to small transactions given the limited size of the financial rand pool available for foreigners wishing to buy or sell South African assets. The commercial rand closed steady at 38.50 cents in featureless trading.

a banned person who may not be quoted under South African law without permission from the Minister of Law and Order while the ANC is a banned organisation.

In a separate move, Mr Chris Heunis, the Minister for Constitutional Development, announced that 5,000 black municipal policemen will be trained over the next six months to act as auxiliaries to the regular police force whose strength is to be increased by 11,000 men to 56,000 over the next 18 months. The municipal policemen will be under the control of the black local authorities and will be responsible for the enforcement of council by-laws as well as the maintenance of law and order.

## Nyerere's successor faces challenge over economy

BY MARY ANN FITZGERALD IN NAIROBI

TANZANIA'S ranking leadership changed hands yesterday when President Ali Hassan Mwinyi was officially sworn in as successor to Mr Julius Nyerere, 63. As the sole presidential candidate, handpicked by Mr Nyerere, Mr Mwinyi received 92 per cent of the vote in national one-party elections on October 27. Mr Nyerere has led Tanzania since independence in 1961.

Mr Nyerere is only the black African head of state to hand over power by constitutional process. He relinquishes his 24-year tenure as the country's leader at a time when his socialist policies have been called into question even by traditionally staunch supporters such as the Scandinavian countries, Tanzania's largest bilateral donors. Speaking at the launch occasion, Mr Nyerere warned that Tanzania's economic ills would not be solved overnight.

Mr Mwinyi faces a major challenge in his new role. He has inherited a legacy of a stagnant industrial sector and declining agricultural yields that make Tanzania the world's 14th poorest nation.

The economy is beset by a 40 per cent inflation rate and a foreign debt of over \$2.5bn. Last year GDP growth was 2.5 per cent, well below the annual population increase of 3.3 per cent. Much of the blame for this performance has been laid at Mr Nyerere's feet.

New blood at the top has led to speculation that application of the Socialist doctrine will be more flexible. Privately, many Tanzanians are hoping that this will be the case, but Mr Nyerere's imprint is likely

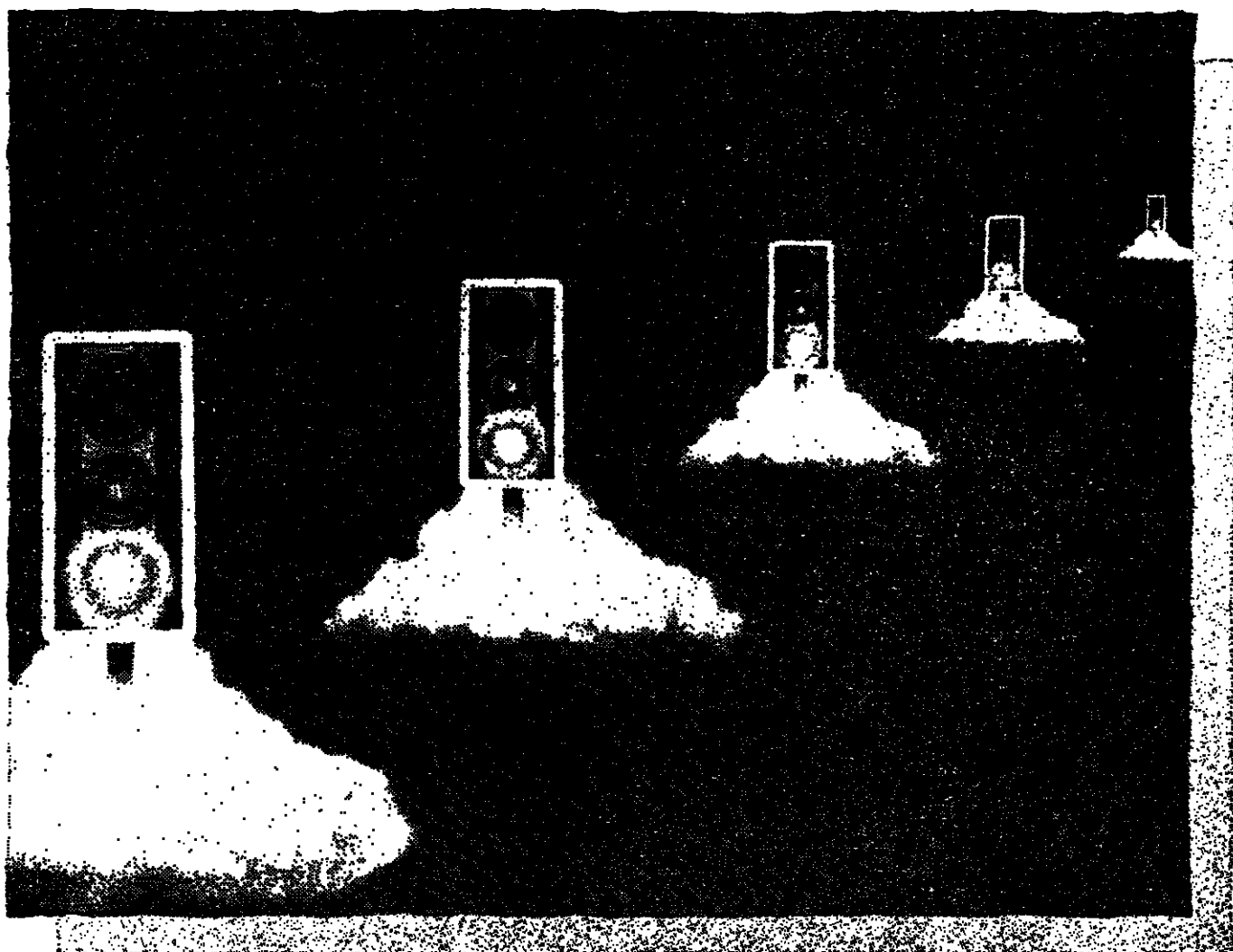


Mr Mwinyi: 92 per cent of vote

to be evident for some time to come, such as the World Bank. Speaking at the launch, Mr Mwinyi held several cabinet posts and most recently was made president of Zanzibar in January 1984. His predecessor, Sheikh Aboud Jumbe, had been fomenting secessionist sentiments. It was Mr Mwinyi's subsequent success at welding the islands into the mainland system that probably earned him his present post.

He was responsible for introducing a duty-free port in Zanzibar and relaxing foreign exchange restrictions that allowed badly needed consumer goods to appear in the shops. Variations of this system were later introduced on the mainland.

Donor countries are pinning their hopes for the resurrection of the economy on renewed negotiations with the IMF.



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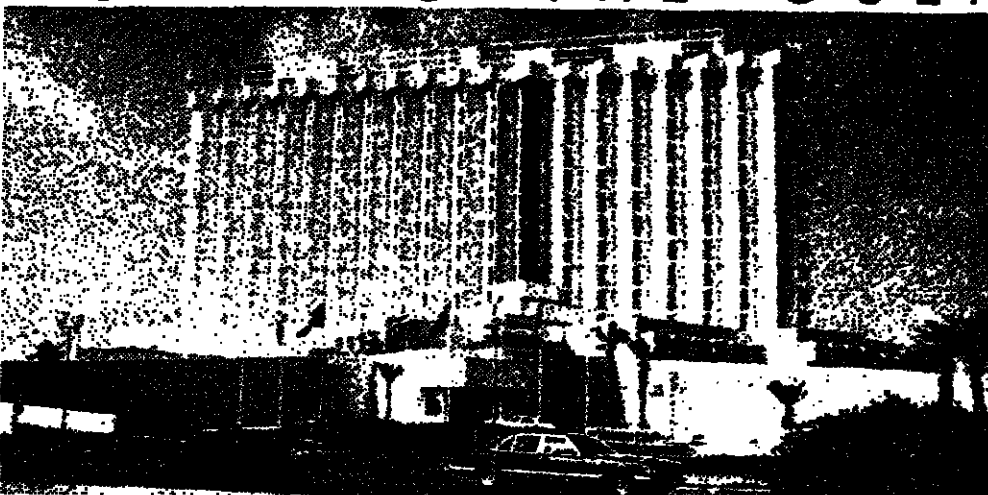
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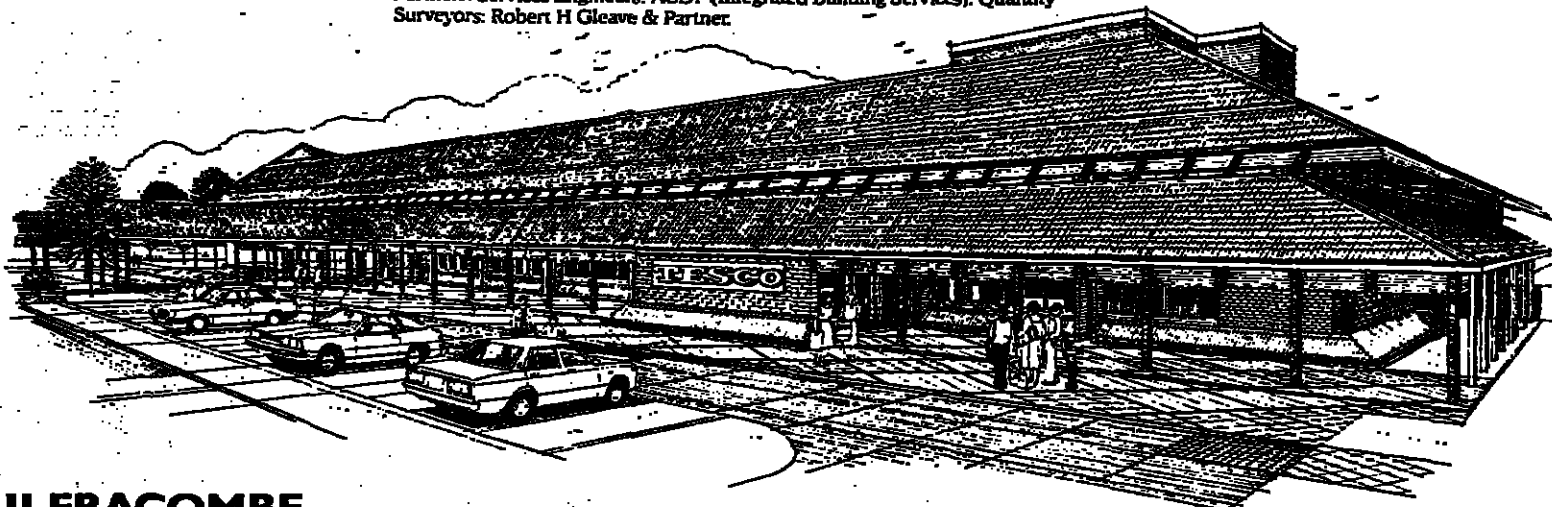
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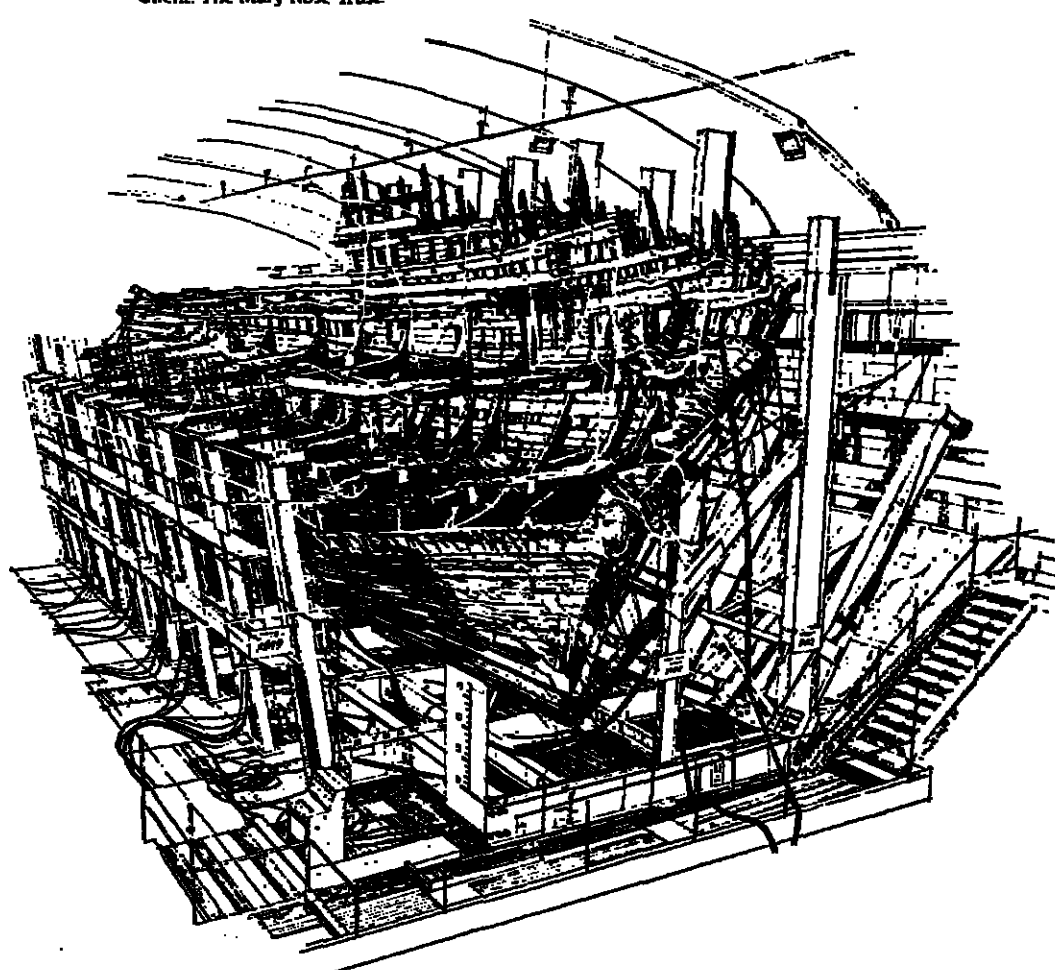
## HULL

Tesco Superstore. A design and construction project by Taylor Woodrow Construction (Northern) Limited in Humberside. Client: Tesco Stores Limited. Architects: Gordon White & Hood. Structural Engineers: Ernest Green & Partners. Services Engineers: ACDP (Integrated Building Services). Quantity Surveyors: Robert H. Gleave & Partners.



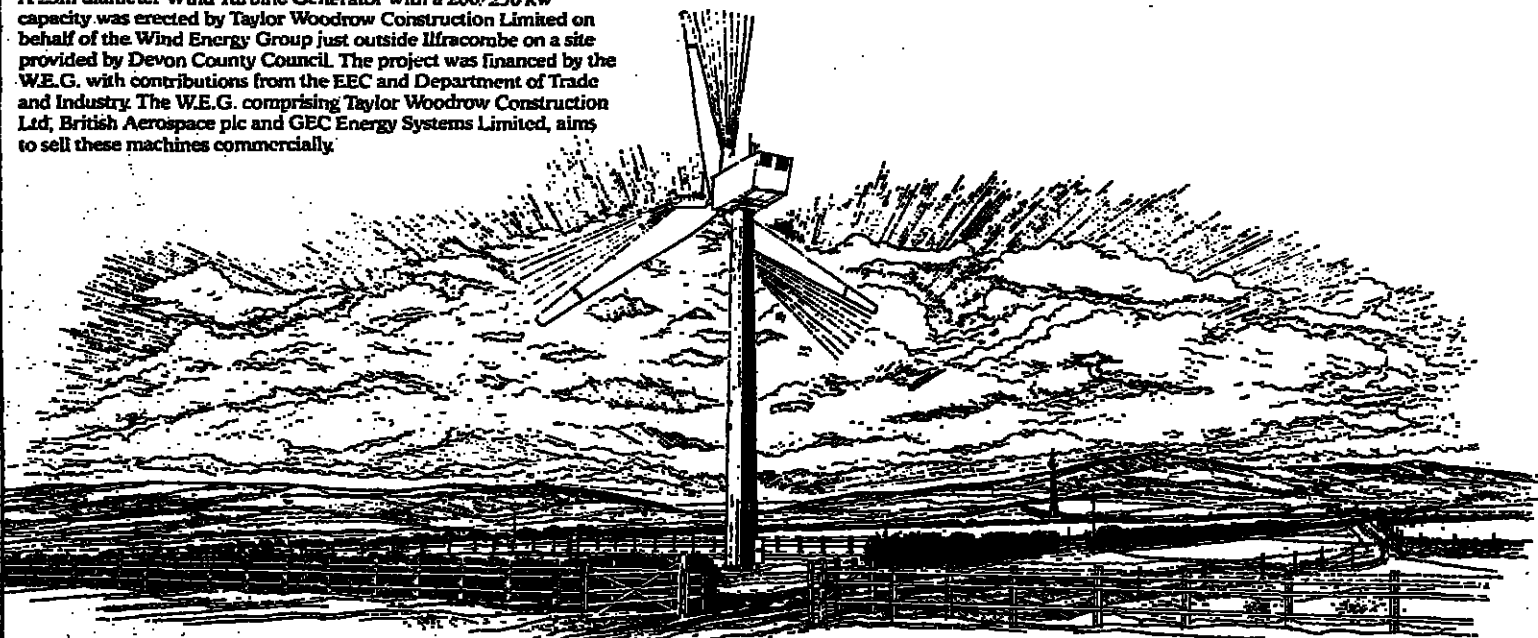
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The Tudor Warship. Mary Rose is back on an even keel for the first time in 440 years. It was rotated upright by Taylor Woodrow Construction Limited, at Portsmouth Naval Base, England. Client: The Mary Rose Trust.



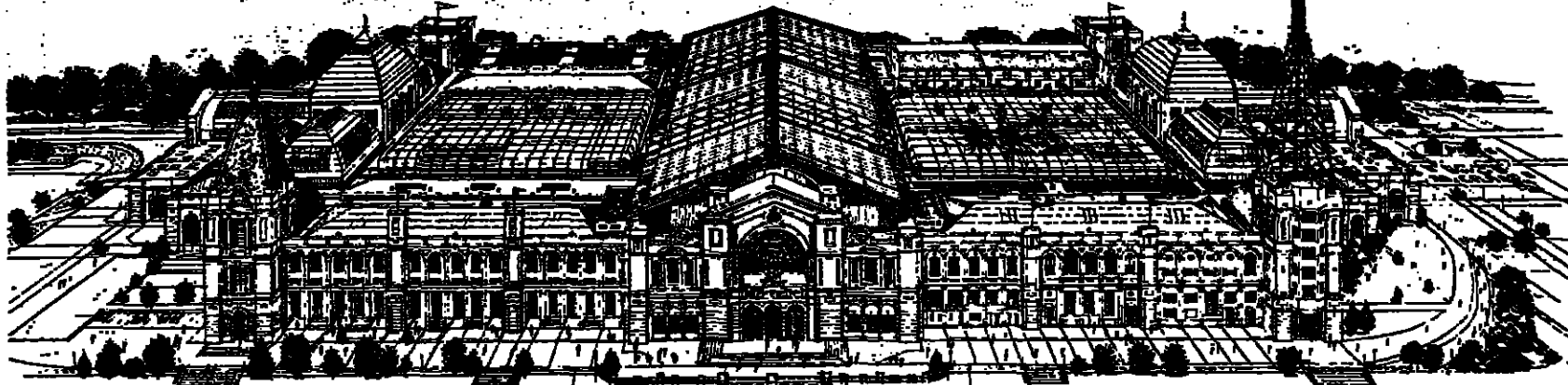
## ILFRACOMBE

A 25m diameter Wind Turbine Generator with a 200/250 kw capacity was erected by Taylor Woodrow Construction Limited on behalf of the Wind Energy Group just outside Ilfracombe on a site provided by Devon County Council. The project was financed by the W.E.G. with contributions from the EEC and Department of Trade and Industry. The W.E.G. comprising Taylor Woodrow Construction Ltd, British Aerospace plc and GEC Energy Systems Limited, aims to sell these machines commercially.



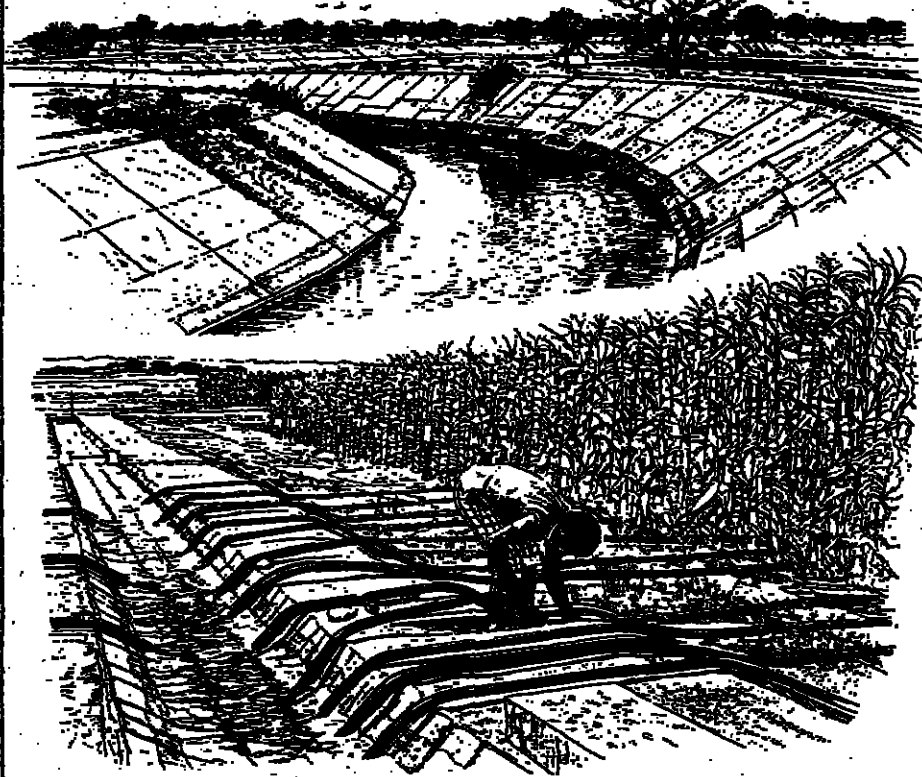
## ALEXANDRA PALACE

The Palace is being restored into a public event and leisure centre with facilities for a TV museum, drama school, concert hall and exhibition centre. Client: The London Borough of Haringey, as trustees of Alexandra Palace. Architect: The Planning Architect, Alexandra Palace Development Team. Structural Engineers: Pell Frischmann and Partners. Quantity Surveyors: Cyril Sweett and Partners. Management Contractors: Taylor Woodrow Construction Limited.



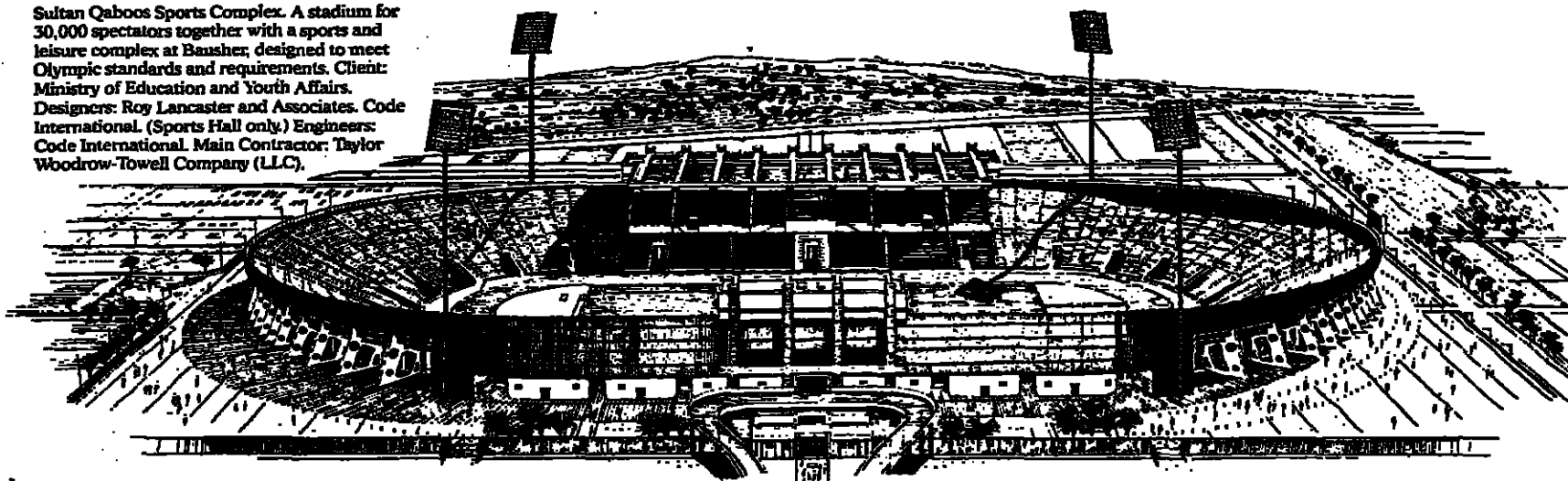
## GHANA

Tono Irrigation Project. A 2,400 hectares irrigation project by Taylor Woodrow International Limited which includes 100km of Laterite roads, 200km of main and feed canals and an earth dam 3km long, 20 metres high. Client: The Ministry of Finance, Ghana, in conjunction with the Irrigation Development Authority.



## OMAN

Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex. A stadium for 30,000 spectators together with a sports and leisure complex at Bawshar, designed to meet Olympic standards and requirements. Client: Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs. Designers: Roy Lancaster and Associates. Code International. (Sports Hall only) Engineers: Code International. Main Contractor: Taylor Woodrow-Towell Company (LLC).



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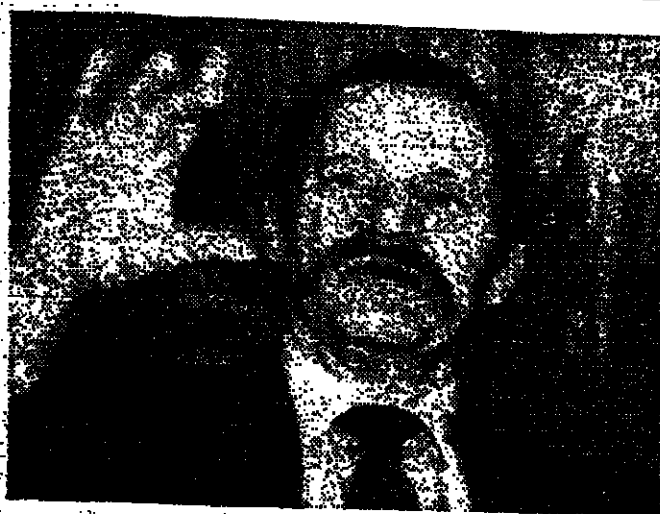
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Vitaly Yurchenko addressing a press conference at the Soviet Embassy in Washington

## US fails to find conspiracy behind 'double defector'

BY REGINALD DALE, U.S. EDITOR IN WASHINGTON

THE Reagan Administration was yesterday keeping its fingers crossed that the extraordinary affair of Mr Vitaly Yurchenko, the Soviet "double defector," would not undermine the US-Soviet summit that begins in Geneva in just under two weeks.

The preliminary assessment of both the White House and the State Department yesterday was that it was unlikely to do so. But there were inevitably nervous recollections of the celebrated U2 incident of May, 1960, in which American spy-plane pilot Gary Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union 15 days before the four-power Paris summit conference between Eisenhower, Khrushchev, MacMillan and De Gaulle. Khrushchev, at least in the American interpretation, used the US incident to wreck the summit.

Some intelligence analysts, including Mr William Colby, a former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, yesterday pointed to a remark by Mr Yurchenko at his Washington Press conference on Monday evening as a "key symbol" that Moscow was not looking for another such incident. Mr Yurchenko said he was not sure that President Reagan had known about his alleged abduction and disassociated his captors from the CIA.

Political analysts, while admitting that Moscow may have wanted to embarrass the Administration and the CIA, found it hard to believe that the Soviet Union could really want to torpedo a summit to which it has itself attached such extreme importance.

Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, who has said that the whole world is waiting for a breakthrough on arms control in Geneva, could hardly want to risk the blame for destroying that opportunity for the sake of a mysterious spy affair.

At least at diplomatic level, tempers on both sides appeared to be calming and the prospect of an undignified tug-of-war over Mr Yurchenko in the run-up to the summit was receding.

## Brazil's industrial region hit by strike

BY ANDREW WHITLEY IN RIO DE JANEIRO

HUNDREDS of thousands of industrial workers went on strike yesterday in Sao Paulo state, Brazil's most important industrial region at the start of an indefinite stoppage called jointly by the two rival national trades union federations, Cut and Conclat. An estimated 600,000 workers were expected to come out.

The strike—the third major stoppage in only seven months for many of those involved—is likely to paralyse a significant chunk of Brazil's engineering, plastics, chemical and wood-working industry.

Called in support of renewed demands for a cut in the working week from 48 to 44 hours and a 20 per cent real wage increase and, above all, quarterly wage rises, the strike is causing considerable political embarrassment to the government of President Jose Sarney.

Key municipal elections are due in Sao Paulo and other

major cities in 10 days' time. There are gloomy forecasts that the strike action could seriously damage the already uncertain prospects of Senator Fernando Henrique Cardoso, candidate of the ruling Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) in Sao Paulo.

Apart from being the largest city in South America, with a population of over 15m, Sao Paulo is the political stronghold of the PMDB. Its loss to the right-wing candidate, former President Janio Quadros, would be a major blow to President Sarney's shaky political base.

The opening day of the strike coincided with a scheduled nationwide broadcast last night by Sr Sarney, in which the president was expected to deliver a highly optimistic progress report on the economy since the civilian Government took office in March.

## Venezuela cuts heavy crude prices to match Mexico

BY RICHARD JOHNS IN CARACAS

VENEZUELA is lowering prices for its heavy and ultra-heavy crudes to match the 40 cent per barrel cut made by Mexico last week.

At the same time the state oil corporation Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) is raising prices for two refined products in the middle distillate range in response to further market conditions.

It is understood that the rate for No 2 diesel is going up by 3 cents per gallon and jet kerosene by 2 cents per gallon.

The lower crude oil prices decided late on Monday night will apply to all varieties of 22

degrees API gravity and below, which are not covered by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries' price structure.

PDVSA is producing about 950,000 barrels a day of heavy crude. Products affected by the latest price change will involve about 200,000 b/d of products.

Oil officials here were puzzled by Mexico's decision arguing that it would not increase output or have much positive impact on refining margins. However, they said, Venezuela had no choice but to follow suit.

# O'Neill lobs budget reform grenade into Reagan's court

BY STEWART FLEMING, US ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON



"THEY PASSED us a hand grenade. We pulled the pin and handed it back. The danger is at some time it will blow us all up." That is the judgment of one Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives in the wake of the spectacular political coup which Mr Tip O'Neill, the House Speaker, pulled off last Friday.

The hand grenade is the proposed reform of the congressional budget process drafted initially by Republican senators Mr Phil Gramm and Mr Warren Rudman and Democrat Mr Ernest Hollings.

The Bill passed the Senate last month with both the support of the Reagan Administration (the reservations of Mr Caspar Weinberger, the Defence Secretary, and Mr George Shultz, the Secretary of State, notwithstanding) and a comfortable bipartisan majority. Twenty-seven Senate Democrats, including the prospective presidential candidate Mr Edward Kennedy unexpectedly flew the colours of fiscal conservatism and backed the Bill to the profound consternation of many Democrats in the house.

The irony of Mr Kennedy's stance was rudely underlined by the position taken by Mr O'Neill, another Irish American Boston politician, who dismissed it as a "Republican incumbent's protection Bill".

The fact that the Bill gathered such broad-based support in the Senate suggests that there are

real fears on both sides of the aisle that the budget deficit issue, which clearly failed to excite the passions of voters in the 1984 presidential election, may indeed explode in Congress's face in the mid-term elections in 1986.

The Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Bill addressed that danger by promising to tackle the deficit problem—but not yet. It mandated a reduction in the budget deficit from the 1985 level of \$211.9bn to zero in 1991 in annual chunks of \$36bn. But the first cuts were not to be required until 1987.

The fiscal year 1986 (which began on October 1) budget deficit target was conveniently set at \$180bn, a level which it was assumed would not require any politically unpopular steps to cut government spending immediately since that is roughly the scale of deficit Washington is expecting.

In future years, the bill demanded that Congress cut the

deficit to the declining budget targets; if Congress failed then the President would be required to do the job for it. To sidestep the danger that voters might balk at even the threat of budget cuts, some politically sensitive spending programmes were deliberately excluded from the risk of the presidential axe.

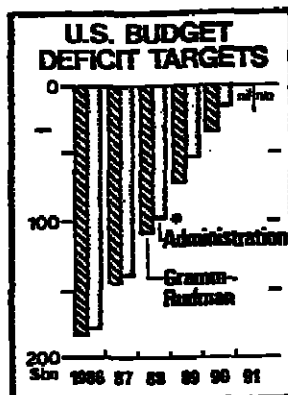
For three weeks beginning on October 16, a Senate House conference committee then juggled with what many saw as a piece of political dynamite amid fears within the Democratic Party that their Republican foes had them cornered.

The Democrats could hardly reject the Bill outright because that would expose them to charges that they really did not want to do anything about the deficit; charges which might lead to Republican victories in close congressional races next year.

However, most observers doubted that the splintered Democratic coalition would be able to muster enough unity to pass its own politically more palatable alternative.

Last Friday, however, Mr O'Neill pulled off what even some White House officials now describe as a "brilliant" coup. He succeeded in uniting all but two of the House Democratic majority behind a Democratic version of the Bill which had two (politically) salient features:

● It would come into effect



\*Assumes continued real economic growth of 4 per cent and interest rates declining to 5 per cent in 1990.

immediately assuming congressional and presidential approval; and

● The maximum allowable deficit for fiscal 1986 would be \$181bn.

The Democratic coalition was pulled together by roping off from mandatory cuts by the President some new areas—in particular certain welfare programmes for the poor which allowed the House black caucus to vote for the Bill—but not so many that right-wing southern Democrats felt they had to vote against it.

So the grenade has been lobbed back into the Senate, and now it is the White House and Senate Republicans who are worried. The Administration

is privately projecting a budget deficit for 1986 of \$190bn. If the two key provisions of the House version of the budget reform Bill were to become law, Mr Reagan would have to start right away making cuts in all sort of budget programmes which Republican voters might not like. The threat of the loss of Republican control of the Senate would loom even more ominously.

The White House must also now confront the embarrassing prospect that it might have to reverse itself and withdraw support for reforming the budget process.

Mr Les Aspin, chairman of the House armed services committee, has predicted that as things stand 45 per cent of any automatic budget cuts required of the President might have to come out of defence spending; another chunk might have to come out of the farm budget.

This is clearly not the end of the story. The Senate plans to pass a revised version of the original Gramm-Rudman bill on Wednesday, and then it will be back to another House/Senate conference. The conferees will face a deadline of November 14, the day the Treasury says it will have to default on interest payments on the national debt if the Bill to increase the federal debt ceiling to \$2 trillion (million million) is not approved before then. The debt increase Bill is currently tied to the budget process reform Bill.

What will happen? No one is sure. Many agree with Ms Alice Rivlin, the former director of the congressional budget office, who says that what is going on now on Capitol Hill has dramatised how absurd it is to try to cut the budget deficit by formula.

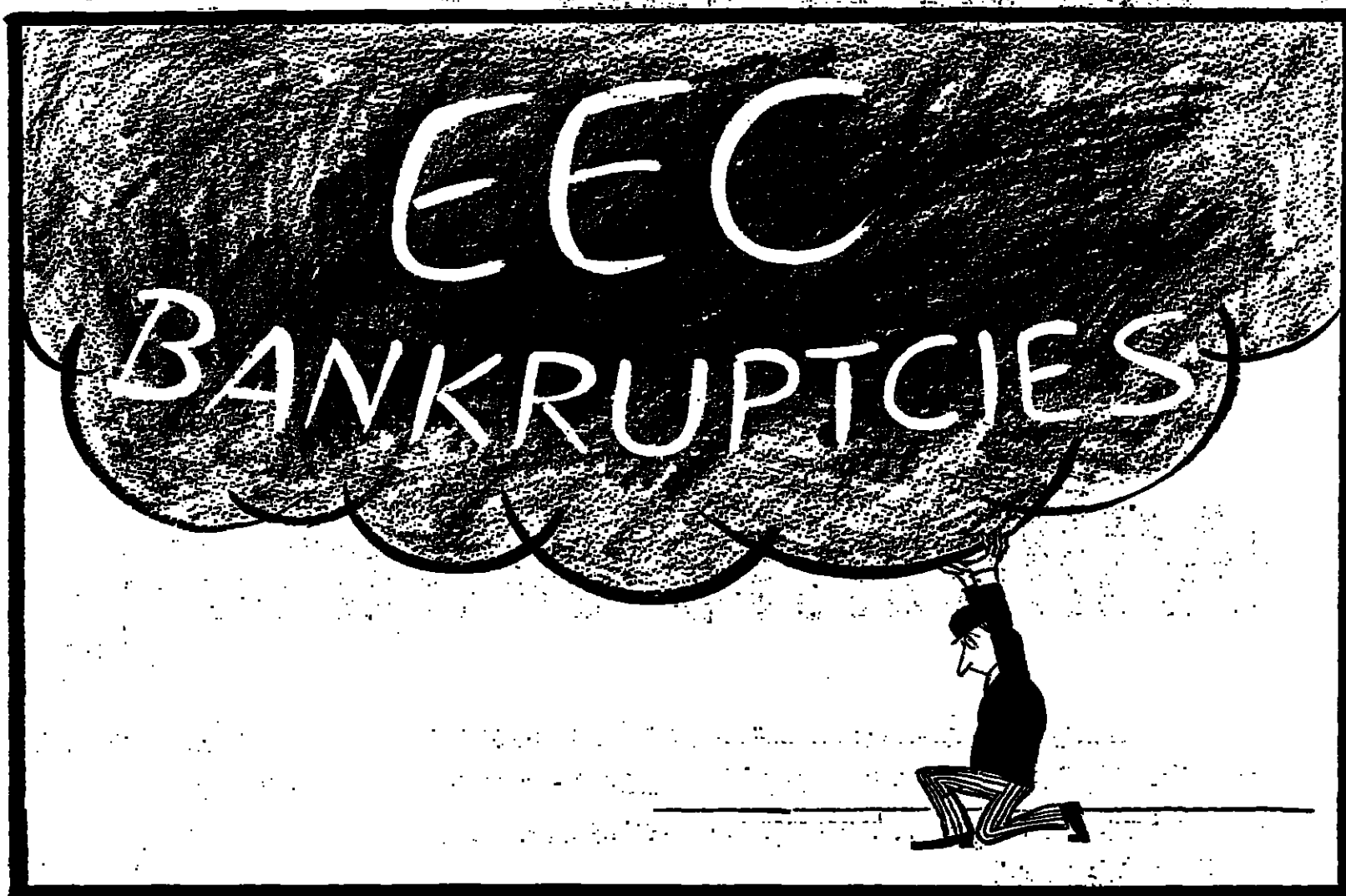
Perhaps Congress will see it like that and find some way of approving a new budget process which actually has no teeth and will like the law calling for full employment, simply become an expression of good intentions.

"I think something will be approved, but weakened if not emasculated," says Mr William Schneider, a political analyst with the American Enterprise Institute.

Up to this point, however, one significant political event has occurred. The Democratic leadership has been able to unite the House in a way which Mr Schneider says has not been seen since the crushing defeat the party suffered in 1980.

Special circumstances, resentment against Mr Gramm, re-elected as a Republican in 1984, and resentment at the Senate for attempting to steam roller the House, may help to account for the unexpected unity. Mr Kevin Phillips, a Washington political consultant speculates that perhaps the Democrats are learning to exploit the Administration's weaknesses in the trade and budget areas—worrying thought for their Republican rivals.

# 64,267 reasons to consider export insurance.



In 1984, Britain's partners in the European Community suffered 64,267 bankruptcies, an increase of 36% since 1982.

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difficult for the exporter to predict when or if a problem will arise.

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WORLD TRADE NEWS

Gatt sees more signs of trend to bilateral trade

BY WILLIAM DULLFORCE IN GENEVA

AMPLE FURTHER evidence of the trend towards bilateral trade arrangements, managed trade and competitive subsidies on exports has emerged over the past six months, the Secretary of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade reported yesterday.

Bangladesh had become the first least-developed country to be subjected by the European Economic Community to trade restraints, the Secretariat said.

Japan, which had announced new market-opening measures during the period, had also called on several other Asian countries, including China and South Korea, to agree to voluntary restrictions on textile and clothing exports.

The Secretariat's report prompted several industrial countries, including the U.S., Canada and Australia, to underline at yesterday's meeting of

the Gatt council the urgent need to get a new round of multi-lateral trade negotiations going. India, on the other hand, thought the deterioration in free trade created a poor climate for trade talks.

By reducing access to their markets, the developed countries were making it increasingly difficult for India and other developing countries to pursue their own efforts to liberalise their trade, the Indian representative said.

The 14 per cent decline in trade-weighted terms in the dollar between February and August, accelerated by the decisions of the Group of Five Western finance ministers in September, held out hope of an eventual easing in the pressures on US producers, the Secretariat said. These pressures have fuelled demands for protection of US markets.

It was generally agreed, however, that the lower dollar would have little short-term impact on the US trade balance.

The stress of "fair" rather than "free trade" appeared to be an increasingly important factor in decisions by Japanese companies to set up manufacturing plants in western Europe and North America, the Secretariat said.

It found evidence that countries were re-assessing the merits of countertrade. Its evidence, however, seemed limited to an agreement in principle by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries to phase out current barter deals by the end of 1985.

The decision, the Secretariat comments, reflects the severe strains placed on the world oil pricing structure by counter-trade involving crude oil.

S. Africa to set up barter deal secretariat

By Anthony Robinson in Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA is to set up a "secretariat for non-conventional trade" which will advise the private sector in setting up barter deals and counter-trade operations, President P. W. Botha announced at an award-giving ceremony for top exporters in Johannesburg.

Creation of the new secretariat, which will be part of South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry, comes against the background of growing sanctions moves against South Africa and at a time when re-negotiation of South Africa's \$2.6bn (£1.7bn) foreign debt requires the maintenance of a strong current-account surplus for debt servicing and capital repayment.

The application of counter-trade practices has developed into an accepted international method of trading which can hardly be ignored and it is in the interests of the republic that this method of trading be utilised, the President said.

The President also announced that South Africa was reviewing its export incentives system as part of its long-term strategy of increasing its non-gold manufactured exports.

The combination of domestic recession and the depreciated rand led to a 17 per cent rise in export volumes and a 27 per cent drop in imports over the first half of this year.

Latest trade statistics for the first eight months show this trend is continuing, with exports at Rand 2.5bn and imports at R14.8bn to give a trade surplus of R7.7bn.

The Government is concerned at the continuing high dependence on the mining industry, which provided 67 per cent of export income last year, and is anxious both to expand exports of manufactured goods and seek new markets.

An EEC trade-in-services case is coming up for close scrutiny to-day  
Brussels puts four member states in dock

BY JONATHAN CARR IN FRANKFURT AND CHRISTIAN TYLER IN LONDON

A HEARING at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg today and tomorrow will receive specially close scrutiny from those who worry whether there will ever be a real common market in Europe.

The European Commission is putting four member states in the dock—West Germany, France, Denmark and Ireland—allegedly flouting two articles in the Treaty of Rome that guaranteed freedom of trade in services across member states' boundaries.

Although the cases concern narrow and technical issues of market access for certain kinds of insurance, the psychological fallout from the judgment will be considerable.

If the Commission is successful—and the preliminary opinion in about two months' time will provide the clues—then political efforts to "complete" the internal market by 1992 could be helped forward.

There are, of course, commercial as well as political interests at stake. In this case, it is the City of London, with its large and sophisticated insurance market that hopes to win a great deal of West German business.

Of the four defendants, therefore, West Germany is seen in London at least as the most important. It is not just the size of the prize that excites the insurers but also the feeling that West Germany, which boasts the most open market in Europe for goods, is the least open when it comes to services.

At first sight, it looks as if the European Court is faced with an open-and-shut case.

IT WAS Mr Franz Schleicher, an insurance broker from Bavaria, who put the cat among the pigeons. Jonathan Carr writes. Until 1981, he placed business for clients domiciled in West Germany with British insurance companies via British brokers.

The reason? The premium rates he could obtain that way were cheaper than those charged by insurance companies in West Germany.

Mr Schleicher was fined DM 18,000 (£4,500) for his ploys by German authorities who argued he had broken

German insurance supervisory law. This states that whoever procures a contract of insurance from, or underwrites on the authority of, an insurer not licensed in Germany, commits a summary offence.

Mr Schleicher holds that this law is incompatible with the Rome Treaty provisions on freedom of services in the Community. The European Commission gave him a sympathetic ear and has carried the issue to the European Court.

If the total return from motor insurance exceeds a certain percentage of premiums, refunds must be made to policyholders, according to a formula which seems pretty obscure.

The cardinal concern behind this is that consumers be protected—and hence that no company be allowed to fail.

Other Continental countries have a similar attitude to "safety supervision," but it is especially marked in West Germany with its bitter history in which hyperinflation, financial collapse and political extremism were intertwined.

"Safety first—by a very long way," has long been the motto, and there are fears that full freedom of services would undermine that principle.

If foreigners want to do insurance business here, all they have to do is set up shop and respect our rules," the argument runs.

The counter-argument, above all from the British, is that the West German insurance consumer is being over-protected, that is, that West German companies can afford to charge high tariffs and make substantial profits, safe in the knowledge that competitors cannot swoop down on them from a foreign base.

British and other non-West German insurance companies have established themselves in West Germany; but why, it is asked, must establishment be a condition of doing business there?

After all, West Germany can sell manufactured goods in Britain without necessarily having a factory there!

Austrians share in E. German contract

By Patrick Blum in Vienna

AN AUSTRIAN and West German consortium has won a DM 250m (£64m) contract to rebuild and modernise the Schwedt petrochemical combine in East Germany.

The contract was signed just over a week ago in Berlin. Voest-Alpine, Austria's state-owned steel, engineering, electronics and trading group, said yesterday.

Voest-Alpine's share of the work will represent about 60 per cent of the contract value with the remaining 40 per cent going to Linde AG, of West Germany.

The work includes erecting new equipment for the production of hydrocarbons and diesel fuel, expanding the capacity of the plant including storage and loading. Work is expected to be completed by August 1988.

Hyundai signs \$208.5m Iraq power plant order

BY STEVEN E. BUTLER IN SEOUL

HYUNDAI Engineering and Construction, South Korea's leading contractor, has signed a \$208.5m (£148m) contract with Iraq to build four high-voltage transformer stations in that country.

Coming less than a week after the news that Hyundai had won a \$754m (£538m) contract to build a ship repair yard in Iraq, the new project raises Hyundai's new contract total for the year to nearly \$2bn.

Under the latest contract, Hyundai will build on a turnkey basis four 400-kilovolt transformer stations in the suburbs of Baghdad by the end of 1987.

A company spokesman said that much of the electrical equipment for the stations would come from Hyundai's sister company, Hyundai Electric Engineering Co. In Iraq, Hyundai has taken nearly half of all South Korea's new overseas contracts this year. Last year Hyundai signed new

contracts worth \$2.45bn, which amounted to 40 per cent of South Korea's total, well up from the company's historic average of about 30 per cent.

A company official said that Hyundai would try to maintain an annual volume of business of about \$2bn, as it has in recent years, and attributed the company's success to a gradual move away from simple civil engineering jobs to more sophisticated projects.

Libbey-Owens-Ford company of the US and Nippon Sheet Glass of Japan have received final authorisation from the South Korean Government to enter into a safety-glass joint venture with Hankuk Glass Company.

The new company, to be called Hankuk Safety Glass, is the latest in a series of new foreign joint ventures that will provide world-class parts and components for South Korea's rapidly growing car industry.

MBB bids for Star Wars order

BY PETER MARSH

MBB of West Germany is bidding for an important Star Wars technology contract in partnership with Boeing, the US aerospace and defence contractor.

The two companies are making a joint submission to the Pentagon to organise an experiment on board a space shuttle in late 1987. The experiment would involve a test of an infra-red telescope capable of tracking space objects such as missiles.

The contract would be worth "a few tens of millions of dollars," Mr Bud Ekas, vice-president and general manager of Boeing's defence systems division, said in London yesterday.

Under the submission to the

US Defence Department's Strategic Defence Initiative Organisation, the body which runs the \$33bn (£23.5bn) Star Wars programme, Boeing would have overall charge of the experiment.

MBB, which is West Germany's biggest aerospace company, would provide a space platform, called SPAS, which the company has developed for civilian space applications and which would carry the telescope in orbit around the earth.

SPAS would be stored inside the cargo bay of a space shuttle until the vehicle reached an orbit above the atmosphere about 250 miles above the earth. At this point, astronauts would eject the platform from the bay

with the telescope on board.

The instruments would continue to drift in orbit around the earth on board the platform, taking measurements of infra-red radiation from naturally-occurring space objects such as stars and planets.

The experiment could indicate the usefulness of the sensor as a device for tracking missiles in flight. Such sensing devices would be an important part of an operational Star Wars system designed to defend the West from nuclear warheads fired by the Soviet Union.

The telescope itself, called the designated optical tracker, is an existing device that was built in the early 1970s by Hughes Aircraft, another large US defence contractor.

British exports to Portugal grow by 24%

By Diana Smith in Lisbon

BRITISH EXPORTS to Portugal grew by 24 per cent in the first eight months of 1985, according to Mr Paul Channon, Britain's Trade Minister.

Mr Channon is visiting Portugal with a group of senior British businessmen as part of a drive to increase trade and investment without necessarily having a factory there!

The impetus began during the Queen's visit in March. This year's improvement in British exports is not enough to overturn the sizeable trade surplus Portugal has enjoyed for the past two years.

But Mr Channon added that by the end of the year, Britain will have sold \$500m-worth of goods to Portugal.

Conference Programme  
Wednesday 11 December 1985

**Keynote Presentations**

- Mr I. K. MacGregor  
Chairman of the Coaltech '85 Advisory Board
- Mr Ron F. Walker MBE MP  
Secretary of State for Energy
- Mr Robert H. Quenson  
President  
Prestbury Holdings Co. Inc.,  
United States of America
- Mr A. J. Fairclough  
Acting Director DGII  
Commission of the  
European Communities
- Mr F. H. Esser  
Managing Director  
Ruhrkohle International GmbH  
Fed. Rep. of Germany
- Mr D. Jones  
Director of the Long Term  
Office  
International Energy Agency  
IEA
- Mr James M. Griffin  
Vice President & Technical  
Director  
The Chase Manhattan Bank N.A.  
United States of America
- The Lord Marshall of  
Goring K. CB, CBE, FRS  
Chairman,  
Central Electricity  
Generating Board,  
United Kingdom

Thursday 12 December  
Technology Sessions

- Preparation & Handling
- Power Generation
- Fluidized Bed Combustion
- Environmental
- Combustion
- Poster Presentations

World Coal Markets  
Session

- Supply characteristics - The  
producer's case
- Logistics - Obtaining maximum  
benefit from link  
between producers and  
consumers

Friday 13 December  
Technology Sessions

- Preparation & Handling
- Gasification
- Fluidized bed combustion

World Coal Markets  
Session

- Buyers view of the market

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Canute James examines the potential benefits of Canada's imports initiative  
Mulroney lifts trade hopes in the Caribbean

THE PRIME MINISTER of Canada, Mr Brian Mulroney, has promised some relief to the hard-pressed economies of the English-speaking Caribbean, most of which have been earning less from their traditional exports and desperately need new markets.

Mr Mulroney has accepted a Caribbean suggestion that Canada establish a one-way free trade facility so Caribbean goods can enter the Canadian market duty free, increasing their competitiveness.

"We anticipate that the arrangements will cover 99 per cent of the goods which the Caribbean currently exports to Canada," he said.

The Canadian trade incentive to be named Caribbean, was suggested by the Caribbean leaders as being similar to the Reagan Administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative; but without the limitations of the U.S. scheme.

The CBI is a 12-year trade scheme initiated in January, 1984, which allows 21 countries designated by Washington to ship a range of goods duty free to the United States.

Caribbean leaders, however, must be hoping that when Mr Mulroney presents the details of Caribbean in a few months, it will differ from the US scheme. It was put to him in terms which suggested that the



Mr Brian Mulroney

region wanted a programme better than the CBI.

The main items they want to ship to Canada duty free are garments, cigars, footwear and rum.

The CBI has been coming under increasing criticism from Caribbean politicians and business leaders, who feel that the scheme is falling short of its promise. It is the economic arm of the Reagan Administration and was implemented in the belief that the regions' economies, strengthened by

greater sales to the US, would be less vulnerable to Cuban and Soviet influence.

Caribbean countries have had reservations about provisions of the US programme which excludes garments, textiles, footwear and other leather goods, and petroleum products.

The region's leaders clearly hope that Canadian industry will be tolerant to these items, which are the basis of its fledgling, but promising, light industrial sector. Fears voiced by US business that it could be affected by a flood of cheap Caribbean imports of garments and footwear which has led to their omission from the list of goods entitled to preferential treatment.

US imports of Caribbean products of the CBI list last year were valued at \$577.7m (£401m), 7.7 per cent of all imports from designated countries. Total US imports of Caribbean products grew last year by \$407m to \$7,494m. Caribbean economists say this growth would have happened anyhow because of an improvement in the US economy.

Further questions about the real value of the Caribbean Basin Initiative to the region are likely to be raised with the publication of US Commerce Department figures showing a



Mr Edward Seng

fall in the value of Caribbean exports to the US in the first half of this year.

Between January and June of this year, exports were \$3,270m, about one-third down on the same period of last year.

Several Caribbean prime ministers recently voiced their concern in a letter to President Ronald Reagan, saying their confidence in the CBI was being eroded and that they were worried at a tendency towards increasing protectionism by US legislators.

"It is... widely acknowledged that the CBI excludes products which are important in our industrial programme. The most noted omissions from the programme viewed in terms of their foreign exchange earnings and employment potential are textiles and garments, footwear and leather products," they wrote.

"In all our countries, this industry offers the best opportunity for quick development measures in terms of job creation with relatively low investment requirements."

The US is aware of the CBI's failing. Mr Ken Blakely, deputy director of the State Department's policy planning council, said: "The initial impact has been somewhat limited, but over the long run, opportunities to enter the United States, duty free, will provide tremendous stimulus for growth in the region."

It is unlikely, however, that the Canadian scheme, whatever its final shape, will do for the Caribbean what the CBI has not. Mr Mulroney, pointing out that already more than 90 per cent of items exported from this region to Canada enter duty free, said: "Obviously these things do impact on the Canadian treasury, but the free flow of trade is what we are all looking for."

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## UK NEWS

# BR announces £182m order for fast trains

BY ANDREW FISHER

BRITISH RAIL announced its biggest ever single batch of orders for passenger trains yesterday, but only about half of the £182m of work to build 632 new vehicles for local services has gone to its own engineering subsidiary.

The orders, part of an upgrading of the provincial network which will cost more than £400m, are the largest placed by BR since the £306m east coast electrification programme from London to Edinburgh in Scotland was authorised 15 months ago.

In March BR also signalled its intention of ordering about 1,500 locomotives in the next 25 years costing about £1.5bn, saying it would not necessarily buy British. BR's subsidiary, British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL), said it had won about £60m of the latest orders, with the rest being shared between Metro-Cammell, part of the Laird Group, and Leyland Vehicles, a BL subsidiary.

But BREL, which has been shedding jobs and seeking more export business in recent years, said it was disappointed not to have won a larger slice of the business. This was put out to competitive tender in line with the BR policy adopted 18 months ago.

The new vehicles are for non-Inter City diesel services on local, regional and suburban routes, and for the electric cross-London link which BR plans to start again in 1988. BREL will build the electric vehicles.

Mr John Edmonds, the provincial sector director, said that with the new investment "BR is demonstrating its commitment to maintaining and substantially upgrading the

services on its provincial lines. They are no longer the Cinderella routes of the railway."

BR said it would be spending about £2m a week on new trains over the next three years. Most of the orders are for 468 Sprinter diesel vehicles to run on local and cross-country services outside the south-east, replacing slower, less comfortable and less reliable trains 25 years old.

Of these, BREL will build 170 at its York plant, with Birmingham-based Metro-Cammell building 228, and Leyland Vehicles of Wokingham the remaining 70.

Delivery of the units, to operate as two-vehicle sets of which one will be powered, is due to start in 1988 and end two years later.

By the time the last Sprinter is delivered, more than half the provincial fleet of 2,500 vehicles will have been renewed.

The greater efficiency of the new diesel vehicles, however, means that three existing units can be replaced by two Sprinters, thus leaving a fleet requirement of about 1,700.

The share of the new business going to BREL will provide job security at York for about 2,700 people until March 1988. Its Sprinter work will be worth £80m and the electric trains for the cross-London route will be worth £55m.

Last May, BREL said it was cutting 4,800 jobs over the next two years and closing the Swindon repair works in Wiltshire by next March.

Repair and maintenance work is lessening as more robust and efficient trains are introduced.

## Sinclair C5 project ends in liquidation

By John Griffiths

SIR CLIVE SINCLAIR'S C5 electric vehicle project finally came to an end yesterday with the appointment of a liquidator.

Mr Christopher Morris, a partner of Toache, Ross, was appointed liquidator TPD, formerly Sinclair Vehicles, at a creditors' meeting.

TPD came into being on September 19, along with a sales subsidiary, Sinclair Vehicles Sales. About 100 creditors were told that Sir Clive himself would be a secured creditor, having lent the company £5.9m against a debenture.

Creditors were told that altogether £8.5m had been lost in the venture and that its total deficiency stood at £14m. About 4,800 of the electric bicycles remain to be sold.

Receivers from Begbie, Pickering, who were called in during mid-October, had estimated that unsecured suppliers were owed about £750,000 while Sir Clive was owed £7m.

Mr David Septe and Mr Anthony Locke, the receivers, had nursed hopes that the company could be sold as a going concern. They intended to keep the sales company in operation but acknowledged that the chances of resuming production - which ended in August - were slight.

## Government launches new inflation-proof savings bond

BY GEORGE GRAHAM

NATIONAL SAVINGS, the UK Government-controlled savings bank, has broken fresh ground with a new form of inflation-proof investment bond.

The indexed-income bond offers an income which rises each year in line with changes in the Retail Price Index. The capital value of the bond remains the same and is returned at the end of its 10-year life.

The rate of interest for the first year will be 8 per cent, with income paid monthly. No tax is deducted at source, but the interest is liable to income tax. The new bond will go on sale on November 11, with a minimum investment of £5,000.

National Savings is already involved in the market for inflation-

proof savings with its index-linked certificate, still known as the grumpy bond, although it is now also available to those under 65 years old. About £4.5bn of these now exist.

The grumpy bond, however, offers an index-linked capital value, rather than income. It is also free of tax. The decision to launch the new bond has puzzled some observers, since it is not immediately clear what type of investor will find it attractive.

London stockbrokers Phillips & Drew estimated that the true annual net return for a basic rate taxpayer would be about 6.33 per cent over its 10-year life, if inflation averaged 5 per cent, compared with about 7.4

per cent on a conventional low coupon gilt-edged government stock.

For higher rate taxpayers the return on the indexed-income bond would be an estimated 3.8 per cent, compared with 6.35 per cent on a low coupon gilt.

Mr Tim Melville-Ross, chief executive of the Nationwide Building Society, which has pioneered index-linked mortgage lending, said the bond appeared to be neither one thing nor the other.

The indexed-income bond is not expected to contribute heavily to National Savings' net sales, since demand for index-linked savings products has declined in the last three years with falling rates of inflation.

## Rail tunnel worries force EuroRoute to amend Channel plan

BY ANDREW TAYLOR

EUROROUTE, one of the principal contenders bidding to build a fixed link across the Channel between England and France appears to be facing problems over its plans to lay a submerged rail tunnel across the seabed.

The Anglo-French consortium has now submitted two versions of the tunnel to the British and French governments. The original version, and still EuroRoute's main option, provides for the rail tunnel to be completed 18 months after a road link across the Channel, also to be built by EuroRoute, is opened.

British Rail and SNCF, the French-owned state railway, however, have argued that more than a third of cross-Channel rail traffic could divert to the road link if the completion of the rail tunnel was delayed. Much of this business would be lost permanently, they argue.

The French Government is also understood to be concerned about EuroRoute's commitment to the rail tunnel, which is to be financed separately from the road link.

In the face of this pressure EuroRoute has produced a second version of the plan providing for a broad rail tunnel which could be constructed simultaneously with the road scheme. This involves an adventurous combination of bridges leading out to artificial islands and connected by a tunnel mid-Channel.

EuroRoute, which is headed in the UK by Sir Nigel Brookes, chairman of Trafalgar House, said last night that the submerged rail tunnel remained its main option, but it was having discussions with BR and SNCF about the possibilities of bringing forward the completion date of the tunnel.

The timing and method of construction on the rail link is crucial to EuroRoute's costing. By delaying the construction of the rail tunnel until after the road scheme is completed it says it would be able to defray the cost of the rail scheme by using the same dredging equipment purchased and used on the road scheme.

Altogether, 10 separate applications were submitted last week for a licence to build a privately financed fixed link across the Channel. The British and French governments said that of the 10 schemes only four had complied with the guidelines published by the two governments last April. The four applicants accepted by the two governments were EuroRoute; Channel Tunnel Group, proposing a twin bore rail tunnel; Eurobridge, proposing a road bridge with 5km spans; and Channel Expressway, backed by Sea Containers, the Bermuda-based shipping group, proposing a twin-motorway tunnel incorporating a rail track.

## TUC tackles pit union problem

BY PHILIP BASSETT, LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

TRADES UNION CONGRESS (TUC) leaders will today meet the executive of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in a first formal attempt to resolve difficulties posed to both bodies by the breakaway Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM). The new union received a further boost yesterday when Daw Mill, a large pit in the Midlands of England, voted by 3 to 1 to join it.

Prospects for the TUC meeting managing to find a solution to the problem posed by the formation of the UDM look slim. The TUC is

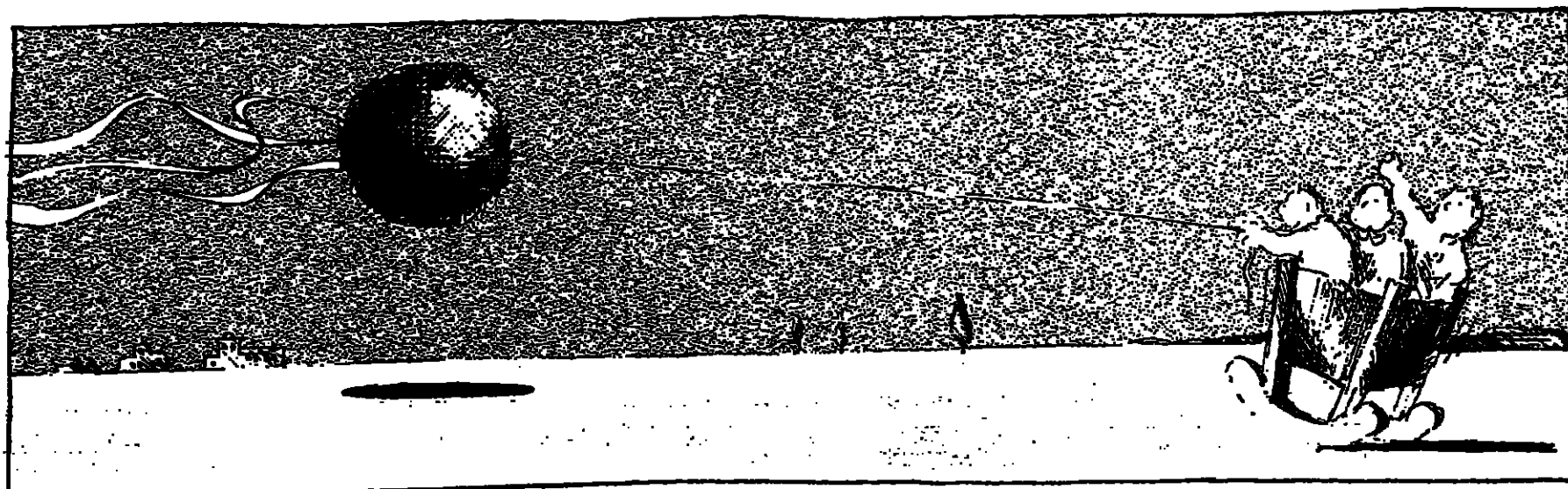
maintaining that it cannot recognise a breakaway from an affiliated organisation, while Mr Arthur Scargill, NUM president, does not acknowledge the UDM's existence as a trade union. The new union now claims membership in excess of 38,000.

Former NUM officials at Daw Mill, which in the main worked throughout the miners' strike, toasted in champagne the future of the UDM when the result of the 24-hour-long secret ballot was announced. Of 1,139 votes cast, 361 were in favour of joining the UDM,

with 276 against - a majority of 75.6 per cent.

Mr Dick Emery, former NUM branch secretary, said the result was "absolutely marvellous". He said it was time Mr Scargill was brought back down to ground level. Mr Ian MacGregor, NCB chairman, welcomed the decision, and hoped it would lead to "constructive discussions about the future of this highly productive mine."

NUM leaders will also today try to come to a decision about the NCB's latest pay proposals in an executive meeting due to take place after the union has seen the TUC.



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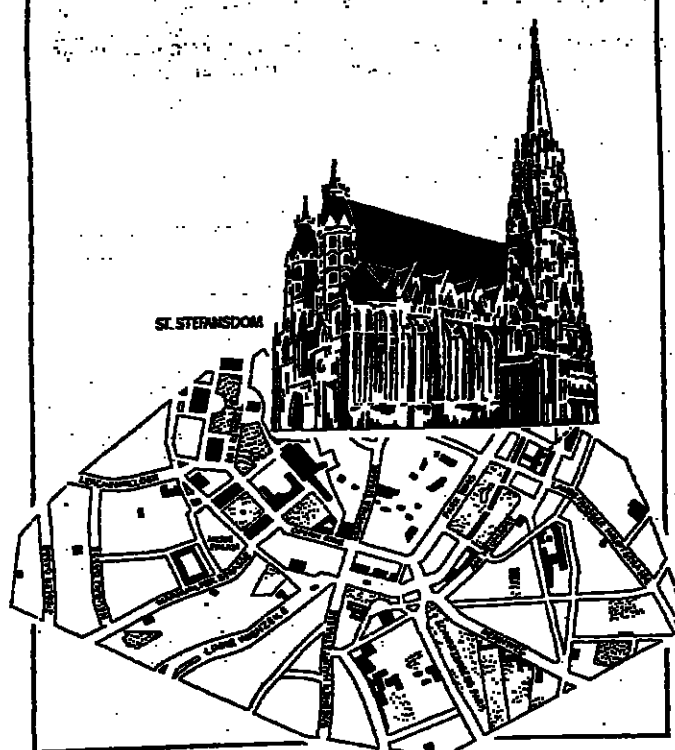
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## UK NEWS

## Banks give strong response to BP's financial reshaping

BY ALEXANDER NICOLL

BRITISH PETROLEUM (BP) has received a strong response from banks to plans for a sweeping reorganisation of its short-term finances. The company said yesterday that it has arranged \$6.5bn of credit lines and plans commercial paper programmes totalling \$2bn.

BP sought bids from 90 banks for a \$1.5bn committed standby credit and \$5bn of uncommitted credit to replace \$3.8bn of existing lines. It was attempting to cut costs not only by seeking very fine lending terms, but also by arranging the deal through its own in-house bank, British Petroleum Finance International (BPFI).

The company has accepted bids from 56 out of 71 banks which offered a total of \$11.8bn, made up of \$4.2bn of committed and \$7.6bn of uncommitted money. As a result of the acceptances, Japanese banks now make up a larger proportion of those with which BP has relationships, and US banks a smaller proportion.

Mr John Browne, chief executive of BPFI, said: "We were over-

whelmed with offers, and are delighted about the response of the banks. We have reaffirmed banking relationships and created new ones."

He would not comment on the cost of the deal. Banks, however, are thought to have had to swallow a steep reduction in their earnings from loans to BP in order to continue doing business with the company. It was believed that BP may have at least halved the average annual fee it will pay to the banks to about four basis points (hundredths of a percentage point), and that its terms will rank among the finest ever achieved by a corporate borrower in the Euromarkets.

The \$1.5bn seven-year underwritten credit will be used as a backup for US commercial paper issues of up to the same amount. The company already issues this paper, but has reorganised the programme and appointed First Boston and Salomon Brothers as joint dealers, replacing Goldman Sachs, which is understood to have a policy of not accepting joint dealerships.

## Ministers to review inner city spending

By Nick Bunker

THE GOVERNMENT has begun a ministerial review of the value for money of public spending on special assistance to the inner cities. Programmes accounting for £503m in 1984-85 are to be examined.

An inter-departmental group headed by Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary and Mr Kenneth Baker, the Environment Secretary, began meeting two weeks ago. They will look at the cost-effectiveness of job creation under the Urban Programme, which channelled £38m this year into inner cities through local authorities.

They will also examine the value for money of projects undertaken by the urban development corporations, such as the Mersey Development Corporation in Liverpool.

Derelict land grants, worth £81m in 1984-85, will also be reviewed. The Government stressed last night that it sees the whole exercise not as the prelude to cuts, but as a way of securing more effective use of resources.

## Malaysian car heads for British launch

BY CHRIS SHERWELL AND WONG SULONG IN KUALA LUMPUR

TWO EXAMPLES of Malaysia's "national car," the Proton Saga, are due to arrive in the UK within the next two weeks to undergo testing of their ability to meet British legislative standards.

This should lead to the car's launch - under another name - at the UK motor show in Birmingham next October.

The privately owned importer, Proton Cars UK, hopes to sell "several thousand" a year through a network of 90 dealers. The UK company is a subsidiary of Mainland Investments, with headquarters at Warrington, Cheshire. It has a number of retail car franchises in the north-west of England. Its managing director is Mr Harry Knopp, a former managing director of Lada Cars GB.

While formal dealer agreements have yet to be signed, a spokesman for Proton Cars UK said yesterday that dealers representing "a good percentage" of the planned network had already indicated their desire to take the franchise.

John Griffiths writes: Jaguar Cars' production reached a new record level of 25,200 units in the first nine months of this year, 14 per cent higher than in the same period last year.

Sales also set a new record at 25,823 - a 9 per cent increase over the 1984 period.

In line with its goal of reducing dependence on the US market - which absorbed 13,253 cars in the first three quarters, up 5 per cent - Jaguar increased sales in Europe over the period by 27 per cent.

The greatest increase was in West Germany, heartland of Jaguar's two main rivals, Mercedes and BMW, where sales reached 1,897 units against 1,412 in the same period of last year.

Sales in the US remain extremely buoyant, however. Jaguar reported that sales in October set a new record for a single month of 2,619 cars with a showroom value of \$54m. For the first 10 months, US sales are up 12 per cent at 15,584 cars.

## Growth in economy 'free of constraints'

By Philip Stephens, Economic Correspondent

THERE ARE no obvious capacity constraints which would prevent Britain's economy from growing at a much faster rate than seen over the last five years, according to a report published today.

The inter-party pressure group Charter for Jobs says in its latest Economic Report that fears that industry could not significantly expand its output without running into shortages of capital equipment or skilled labour are unfounded.

Recent studies from the London Business School, based on data from the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) quarterly industrial trends survey, have suggested that manufacturing companies are now working at close to their maximum capacity.

Charter for Jobs, however, argues that while it is clear that Britain's capital stock has been badly hit over the last six years the main obstacle to higher output remains lack of demand.

## Citibank freed from subpoena over release of documents

BY RAYMOND HUGHES, LAW COURTS CORRESPONDENT

CITIBANK has been freed from a subpoena requiring it to produce documents from its New York head office for use in a pending English High Court action involving alleged international fraud.

In the High Court in London yesterday Mr Justice Hoffmann said that the subpoena and an order that Citibank, which is not a party to the pending action, allow the documents to be inspected and copied, were an infringement of US sovereignty.

Discharging both the subpoena and the order, the judge said that it should be possible to obtain the documents through the New York court, which would give Citibank the protection of a New York court order, before the English trial starts later this month.

The judge said that the issue was important, especially to foreign banks such as Citibank with branches in London.

The background to it was international fraud. An Australian-born businessman, Mr Kenneth MacKinnon, had started an action alleging that he had been swindled out of \$250,000 by two defendants to his action, Mr Alan Shephard and Mr Raymond Lanciout.

He alleged that they had pretended that, through certain US and Hong Kong companies and a Liechtenstein corporation, they would procure him a \$380m loan to buy a property in Hong Kong.

Mr MacKinnon paid a \$250,000 advance fee into the Citibank, New York, account of a Bahaman company, International Advisory Services (1979).

He now claimed that there had been no intention or ability to get him the loan, and that it had been a scheme to defraud him. Because International Advisory Services (1979) had since ceased to exist, Mr MacKinnon wanted to get details of its Citibank account from the bank itself.

He obtained inspection orders and subpoenas against Citibank and also against Chase Manhattan Bank and Bank of America in respect of other documents relevant to the alleged fraud.

Chase Manhattan Bank and Bank of America had raised no objection but Citibank argued that the subpoena and order exceeded the High Court's international jurisdiction and infringed US sovereignty.

Mr Justice Hoffmann said that what was required was the production of documents outside the UK concerning business it had transacted outside the UK.

Only in exceptional circumstances should such a requirement be imposed on a foreign corporation, and in particular a foreign bank, the judge said. The need to exercise the court's jurisdiction with due regard to the sovereignty of others is particularly important in the case of banks.

"Banks are in a special position because their documents are almost invariably concerned not only with their own business but with that of their customers. They will owe their customers a duty of confidence regulated by the law of the country where the account is kept."

If every country where a bank happened to carry on business asserted a right to require that bank to produce documents relating to accounts kept in another country, banks would be in the unhappy position of being forced to submit to whichever country could apply the greatest pressure.

It was not an exceptional case justifying the making of an exorbitant order, the judge concluded. There was no question of not pursuing the case. The \$250,000 had almost certainly been long ago spirited away. Mr MacKinnon had not satisfactorily explained why he had left his move against the bank so late when the relevance of the documents must have been known since his action was started.

Nor was the judge satisfied that it would not be possible to get the documents from the New York court before the trial started on November 25. Citibank had said it was willing to co-operate in that regard.

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## THE MANAGEMENT PAGE

EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER LORENZ

R&amp;D at Hewlett-Packard

## Keeping close to reality

Peter Marsh on the US electronics group's approach to innovation

**TECHNOLOGY** researchers must have freedom to think but at the same time not lose sight of commercial disciplines—that is the unwritten rule of research managers in most quarters of industry.

Yet practising this rule is far from easy. Unconstrained "creative" thinking has led to many of the technology world's disasters, while heavy-handed supervision of scientists can curtail their free-wheeling style and kill good ideas at birth.

Hewlett-Packard, the US electronics group with a turnover of \$6bn and some 50 separate product divisions, has probably come as near as anyone to finding the right approach.

With a set of management methods thought out over 20 years, it attempts to keep its research staff flexible and alive to new thoughts. At the same time, Hewlett-Packard keeps these people in touch with commercial realities via a loosely-configured network of relationships with staff at the selling end of the company's activities.

This network is crucial to the company's success, according to Dr Don Hammond, director of Hewlett-Packard's Bristol research centre. The centre is one of six run by the company (the other five are in Palo Alto, California, and in the UK).

Each laboratory head knows that if he is to succeed, his products must make it into the divisions," says Hammond.

Hammond, 58, was one of the original directors of the 1,200-strong Hewlett-Packard Laboratories, which was founded in 1965. He came to Britain in 1968 to oversee the setting up of the Bristol centre, the only one of the six establishments that is outside Palo Alto, California.

The laboratories spend some \$90m a year on long-term research. Hewlett-Packard spends a further \$500m on "applied" aspects of research and development, activities left to the product divisions themselves. The latter are concerned with anything from medical equipment to office systems to instruments for factory automation.

**HEWLETT-PACKARD** picked Bristol for the site of its first research laboratory outside California after a long search in which it examined alternatives, both in Europe and the US.

The research centre, set up a year ago to specialise in work on new computer systems and software, employs 50 people, a number scheduled to grow to 170 by 1988. The establishment is not far from a Hewlett-Packard factory that makes computer peripherals such as disc drives.

According to Don Hammond, director of the centre, Hewlett-Packard examined the merits of Seattle, Boston, North Carolina, Hawaii and Colorado (as well as various European sites) before plumping for Britain's West Country.

The main reason for setting up a research centre out-

side California was to obtain new technical and scientific thrusts—to avoid what Hammond calls the "handwagonism" that can follow the grouping of researchers in one location.

Hewlett-Packard also wanted a research centre in Europe to reflect the fact that 30 per cent of its sales come from this market.

The UK was chosen because of the good quality of its researchers in computers and related disciplines. This has been borne out in the recruiting process for the Bristol centre. Hammond says he has been astounded by the high quality of applicants for jobs, particularly from people in their 20s.

Bristol finally won out over the other contenders for its good housing and country-side and pleasant climate.

ately vague—what is more they can be modified very easily through personal contacts between laboratory workers and people in the operating divisions.

Researchers are encouraged to spend as much time as possible on the factory floors at the divisions to pick up ideas for product or process improvements from manufacturing problems.

There is a rigid policy to monitor the course of technology innovations from their appearance in the laboratories to their incorporation in products.

Each year, the director of each laboratory attempts to relate his annual budget to the percentage of company profits that can be ascribed to advances made at his research centre.

With these provisions, the figures normally show that profits due to technical advances are two or three times greater

than the sum spent on the original research. If it does nothing else, the rigmarole keeps researchers on their toes and presses home the point that they are accountable to the world outside the laboratory.

As a rough guide, Hammond says that between 100 and 200 different technology thrusts are taking place in the six laboratories. About half of them (50 at any one time) eventually make an impact on a product about to enter the market place.

The technologies could include, for instance, new kinds of computer architecture, advanced chip-making techniques or novel ink-jets for office printers.

The omis is on the laboratories, not the operating divisions, to come up with the radical thoughts for future activities. That is the case, in particular, in research in artificial intelligence that could provide new forms of "thinking" computers, an area under special study at the Bristol centre.

Dr John Taylor, recruited to serve as second-in-command to Hammond in Bristol from a top job at the Ministry of Defence's Admiralty Research Establishment in Portsmouth, contrasts this with the "customer-contractor" approach commonly adopted in the research community.

In this, the roles are reversed in that the selling divisions of a company (or the central departments of a government organisation) come up with specific research goals and expect their laboratories to meet them.

The customer-contractor technique has merits in that it forces people to think in a focused way and is relatively simple to administer and cost. The drawback, however, is that it compels people to think in constrained channels and can cut out creativity.

While Hewlett-Packard insists on a management structure (albeit an informal one) which keeps researchers tied into the company's operating divisions, it attempts still to leave individual scientists time for unorthodox approaches.

Taylor says that staff are told to spend 5-10 per cent of their time on "unauthorised ideas" in other words activities that senior managers have not



Don Hammond: refers to his researchers as "renaissance people"; they may have to change technical tack half a dozen times in their careers

approved. "These are different approaches to a problem—what scientists call 'under the bench' work."

Company policy is to keep vague the very titles of the six laboratories—they mostly have anonymous names such as "systems performance"—and to change the centres' overall brief every three or so years.

"If you give these centres titles that are too tight, you limit researchers' licence to invent. We don't want people to be highly focused—we want people who come up with great ideas."

Individual projects may swiftly cease in the light of changes in technical or market considerations. "You tell people they mustn't be destroyed if their favourite projects come to an end," says Taylor. "Research laboratories are often littered with projects that no-one has known how to stop. We have to hint, people who can go from job to job."

Perhaps Hammond is showing a romantic streak when he calls Hewlett-Packard researchers "renaissance people." They may have to change tack technically half a dozen times during their career as well as

know something about marketing, management and manufacturing. They may be working on projects that will pay off, in terms of a product or process innovation, in anything between two and 10 years.

In an interesting aside, Hammond points to the rarely discussed problem of giving scientists visible signs of success.

This management problem, says Hammond, can sometimes lead to the need to cut off a research programme early, not because it is unpromising but simply to feed an idea into Hewlett-Packard's selling divisions with which an individual researcher can identify.

Such a policy, according to Hammond, reduces the chance of the company gaining a substantial reward—in other words it substitutes the certainty of a small technical advance for the possibility of a substantial breakthrough—but keeps its researchers happy and performing well.

"It is possible that the success rate of a laboratory can be too high. You take some losses (in terms of researchers' attitudes) if you keep going after the high stakes. We must be aware not only of financial risks, but about people risks."

## Labour relations

## 'Not enough change has taken place'

**HAS THE** management of labour and labour relations really improved over the past seven years of decline in British manufacturing? No, if anything it has worsened, according to Professor Chris Higgins, director of Bradford University's Management Centre.

From his vantage point at the former Victorian Congregationalist Training College that now houses the centre, Higgins has monitored the performance of managers in learning lessons within British industry and concludes that it looks to have been very patchy indeed—a view which cuts across that which Government ministers appear to believe.

While managers are more clued up on how to market their companies and products and are much better at coping with information technology, they might actually be doing worse when it comes to dealing with the men and women who work for them.

"I suggest that in manufacturing more than half the companies are doing less consultation with their workforces—whatever they might claim," says Higgins. "Management is tougher, and I believe the more enlightened senior managers are worried about this. Whatever Mrs Thatcher might think or say there is often a greater degree of polarisation in a company than there was before."

It is an opinion that does not go down too well with those who believe that recession has transmitted fundamental shockwaves for the better through the ranks of the country's middle managers.

Higgins, the former economic planning director for IPC, the publishing group, and the management centre's director for 14 years, sees a thousand managers a year from a cross section of manufacturing and service companies attend courses at Bradford, some tailor-made for them at the centre. This is beside the management research projects for individual companies undertaken by the centre and its throughput of

650 undergraduate and post-graduate management students.

The area he works in, too, once a great bastion of production but like so many Northern and Midlands cities, now fallen on much harder times, encompasses scores of companies whose managements either have or have not come to terms with change.

Some good things have certainly been happening, he argues. For one, professional managers have become a bit more professional.

Smaller manufacturing companies are also taking on professional engineers where in the past they either did not want them or could not attract them, he says.

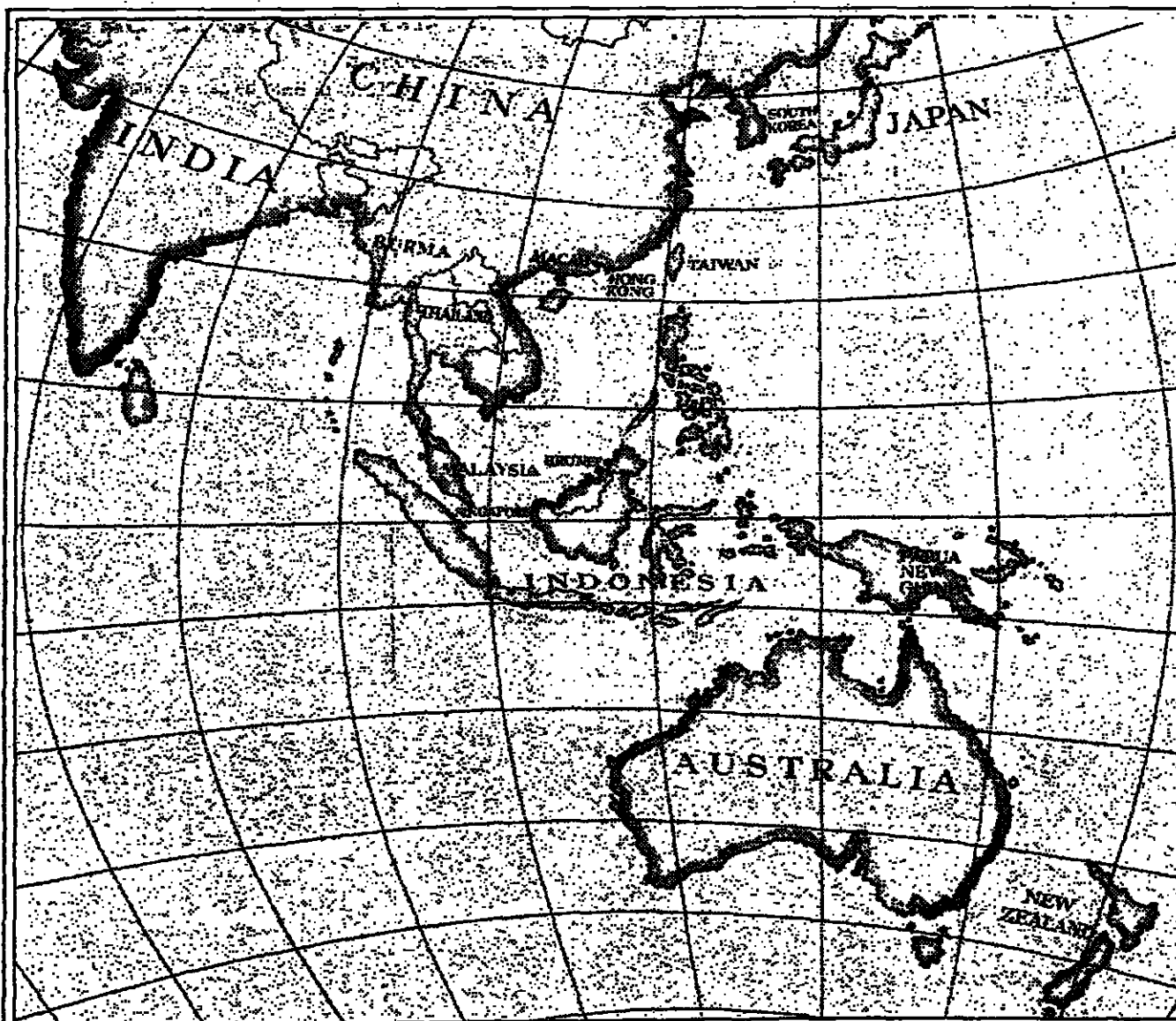
But Higgins identifies plenty of adverse developments. "I do not think companies have gained much from the political climate. I think it has tended to help the less good managers in dealing with the shop floor." He believes that in stark contrast to what some managers might argue, companies need to go back to what they did in the 1970s—which, for many of them, was the adoption of more meaningful consultation than they practice now.

Some of the changes he sees are not clear cut. An increasing number of managers are thinking more before making decisions—which is good—but only in the short term rather than taking the Japanese style long view, argues Higgins.

"In some companies middle managers are becoming more risk averse," he says, meaning that companies are recruiting more "organisation men" who fit into the company's culture. That is probably helpful if the company's culture is good, not so healthy if it is not.

It all comes down to a company's culture, says Higgins, and the best companies tend to be those not only with a strong internal ethos but which also use educational establishments (which presumably includes his own).

Nick Garnett



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James C. Cusack, Trustee  
1180 Gwynne Building  
500 West Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
Telephone (616) 621-6760

All holders of 5% Guaranteed Convertible Debentures who wish to vote on the Plan must return a completed ballot together with a copy of the Disclosure Statement and Plan to the Trustee no later than 5:00 PM, Cincinnati time, on November 12, 1985 at:

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## TECHNOLOGY

Roy Garner in Tokyo reports on export openings for the West in office automation

## Sunrise for software

PRESSURE ON Japan to increase its imports has rarely been stronger but there is one import the Japanese will always welcome—western software expertise.

In office automation the Japanese have faithfully followed the promises of their industry leaders and bought business and personal computers in large quantities.

Failure to provide the necessary software, however, has led to a block to further growth. Enterprising foreign companies and individuals are capitalising on this.

Japan has of course faced special difficulties in O/A, the primary problem being the complex written forms of the Japanese language.

Of almost equal handicap is that Japanese engineers, although trained in software technologies, lack expertise when organising innovative software development programs.

On the sociological plane progress is further frustrated by the age-old custom of inter-departmental communication by means of hand-written notes.

Taking the broadest perspective, many in O/A believe no real substantial progress in broadening the use of office technologies can occur until a way is found to circumvent the use of the keyboard.

In Japanese offices those in busy middle-management positions and above have largely given up on earlier attempts to master personal skills in using office computers and information terminals and are resigned to acting as the supervisors of such work as handled by lower-level staff.

Bringing the Japanese executive into O/A will ultimately involve developing a device allowing input or access of

information by such methods as voice and interactive graphics. In the meantime companies are concentrating on improving conventional equipment.

MicroPro of the US came into Japan three years ago to market its English language WordStar word-processing software and has just launched TwinStar, its first software package fully customised to Japan. Its experience can offer lessons for others contemplating entry.

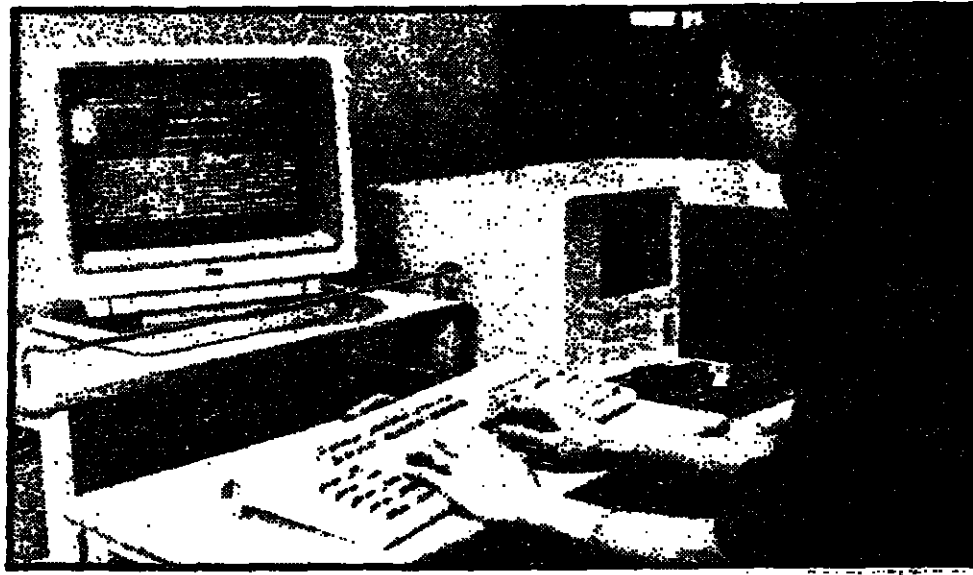
Mr Kirk Hurford, MicroPro's managing director in Japan, says that while market potential is enormous the growth rate of business software is not enough to favour a straight investment approach. MicroPro planned to use funds from the sale of its English language software to bolster the high costs of starting its operations.

The aim was to develop a software package which could offer simultaneous operation with both kanji (Chinese characters used in the Japanese language) and English language word processing functions. With Japanese systems the user normally must choose either one language or the other.

Mr Hurford recalls that at the planning stage of TwinStar the company's first problem came in deciding what the Japanese customer needed.

"In Japan the concepts of word-processing were very naive; nobody really knew what word processing was. Whereas people in the West have used word-processing concepts for the past 50 years or so, the Japanese don't have a feeling for the process. Japanese 'word-processing' products which handle kanji and use lots of graphics are what we would usually call editors, not word-processors."

MicroPro's primary task was



Kanji characters provide opportunities for software designers

consequently identified as educating the consumer about just what a word-processor could offer. Mr Hurford was convinced that if his company's word-processing software could be modified to accommodate Japanese requirements, notably for sophisticated graphics, their product could be ahead of the competition.

Market research was the next obstacle. The company has found this a little-developed science in Japan, with manufacturers simply putting a product on the market and waiting to see if it sells, an approach MicroPro felt unsuitable.

MicroPro solved this by providing distributors with detailed descriptions of planned products and then basing the judgment of their potential on the volume of goods the distributors said they would be prepared to order.

When it came to writing the TwinStar software it was essential to have Japanese programmers guiding the process to ensure effective handling of

language problems. Research showed, however, that many Japanese software development programs were failing because the programmers were using a hardware development planning approach for software projects. Japanese management don't realise that you can't throw people at a software problem," said Mr Hurford, who feels that such difficulties have been behind problems in Japan's 5th generation computer project.

An optimistic view of market potential is also held by Mr Bill Margerison of the US, who has recently formed his own word-processing and general communications functions software company, Nippon Computools.

Mr Margerison says users seek improved file transfer capabilities to ensure exact document duplication and automatic conversion of data into a receiving site's format, communications functions (making use of the recent relaxation of telecommunication regulations), domestic electronic mail using kanji characters and graphics-oriented software able to handle

the design and processing of such documents as flyers and pamphlets, which normally need an outside printing company. Computool's main product is the "CompuComm" software, which offers "Japanese" W/P functions for personal computers.

Mr John Elemans, a specialist in office systems software who works on a contract basis for Japanese companies, says there are "endless opportunities" in Japan for foreigners with software skills.

Mr Elemans echoes Mr Hurford's view of a widespread ignorance of the potentials of office systems. Software developers, he says, "never think about who's going to use the software, or how to use it, and the user-support is pathetic."

Users also have "an incredible amount of naivety," he says. "One business customer recently asked me if I could build him a system where he could speak to the machine instead of typing and get English answers to his questions in Japanese!"

## Self-diagnostic computers make repairs easy

BANKERS, BROKERS and manufacturers who may never have changed a light bulb now have the opportunity to repair their own £400,000 computers. If they bought it from Stratus, a leading supplier of fault-tolerant computing systems.

Yesterday Stratus, which has about 300 customers world-wide, opened its European support centre in Hounslow, west London. It houses a high performance Stratus computer which is the nerve centre of the company's remote service network.

Stratus computers are built with their own fault-finding diagnostics. If a component fails—a processor, board, or part of the semiconductor memory—the computer carries on working normally because all components are duplicated. The computer, however, automatically dials the Hounslow support centre and tells the computer there what has gone wrong.

A new component is sent to the installation either by mail or messenger. The arrival of the new part may be the end of the first indication that anything is amiss. It is then a simple matter for the customer to pull out the failed board and replace it.

Mr David Taylor, managing director of Stratus in the UK, says: "Anybody can do it. In fact, we know when a component breaks take place in some installations."

"People pull boards out to show their colleagues how simple it is and the computer here is deluged with telephone calls. Now, we have built a few minutes delay into the software to give them time to replace them."

The Stratus remote service network, which has been running in the US since 1982, is one of the most advanced of its kind. The company itself seems now to have overcome its initial inexperience and is growing rapidly with third quarter revenues of \$1.1m (£14.6m) up 90 per cent from the same period a year ago. In Europe it established a UK subsidiary last year and is forming a company in the Netherlands and another in West Germany.

It is rapidly becoming a significant player in a market



David Taylor: "Anyone can repair the computer"

dominated by one company, Tandem, but which everybody agrees is key to the future development of cost-effective computing systems.

Fault-tolerant computers are designed never to fail outright but to continue working on all available hardware. However, if a component fails, the system will automatically switch to a backup component.

Stratus computers are marketed by IBM and Olivetti under their own brand names. Yesterday Mr William Foster, president of Stratus, announced in London that the company intended to support international rules governing the way computers can be connected to exchange and share data and programs.

Mr Foster said it intended to support all the component parts of a theoretical reference model for open systems interconnection being developed by the International Standards Organisation.

The principal marketing areas for fault-tolerant computers of the kind made by Tandem, and by Stratus has been finance and banking where a computer "off the air" for even a few minutes can mean substantial loss of profits.

Both companies are mounting considerable campaigns to persuade London's financial community that it will need fault-tolerant hardware to guarantee operations after the City's "Big Bang" next October.

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## Silicon cell efficiency claim

SOVONICS Solar Systems of Las Vegas claims to have achieved a record conversion efficiency of 12.7 per cent in the laboratory for its amorphous silicon cells.

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High stability is claimed for the three-layer construction. The company says the cell will retain more than 90 per cent of its efficiency over 20 years.

Sovonics, a partnership of Standard Oil Company and Energy Conversion Devices, currently makes cells with efficiencies of about 8 per cent. The cell material is made in foot-wide, 1,000 ft long strips which are cut up to make rural and third world power supplies. More from the US on (313) 238 1900.

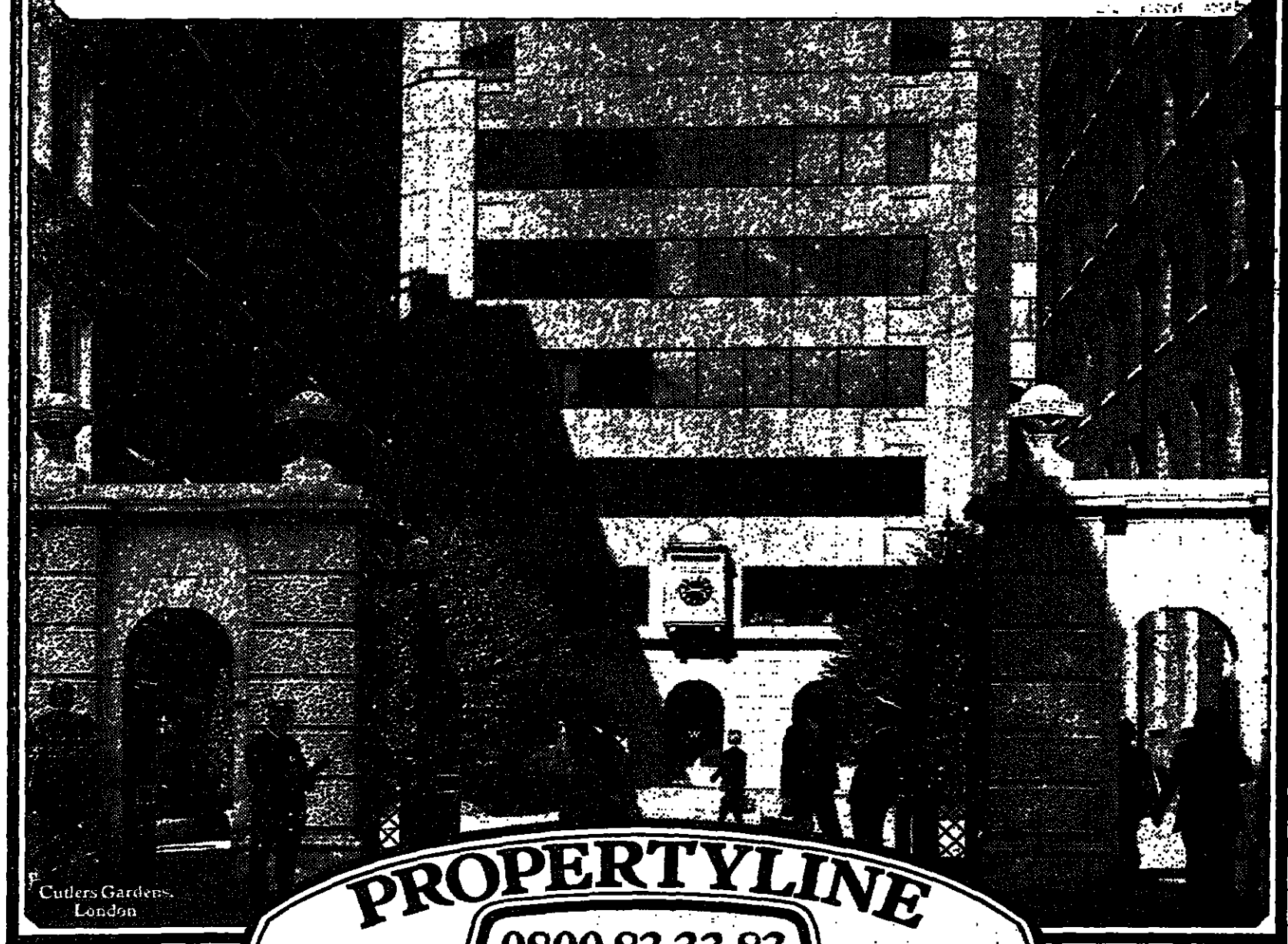
## Ribbon security

ALTHOUGH MANY companies go to some trouble to dispose of sensitive documents by shredding them, rather fewer have realised that typewriter ribbons pose a similar threat if they are simply thrown into waste-paper baskets.

According to Eba Inago of Newbury, ribbons, which cannot be put through ordinary office shredders and it is not safe to burn them unless special precautions are taken. So the company is offering a unit called Carbon 2000 which destroys whole ribbons in bulk beyond any possibility of recovering information. It will also shred video cassettes, floppy disks, files and similar office items that cannot be dealt with by ordinary paper shredders.

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## FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

Wednesday November 6 1985

## French Banking

## Moving into fresh orbits

By DAVID MARSH



Prime Minister Laurent Fabius: new initiatives have surprised many bankers

LIKE PLANETS coming under a new configuration of gravitational forces, French banks are slowly being forced to give up the old ways of the solar system and move to fresh orbits.

A unique constellation of factors — the continued fall of French inflation, world-wide financial deregulation and probable denationalisation moves from next year onwards — is confronting the banks with problems and challenges which will greatly tax their strength over the next 12 months.

Like other Continental countries, which have long practised universal banking but fallen well behind the pace of financial revolution in London and New York, France faces a probably painful period of adaptation in its banking and financial markets.

Accelerating disintegration abroad of the barriers between equity and debt markets, between long and short-term instruments, and between the different geographical market-places themselves has coincided with a different set of specific changes taking place within France.

The progressive fall in French

inflation to around 5 per cent this year, the symbol of the French Socialist return to the fold of international economic orthodoxy, has steadied the franc against the Deutsche Mark and greatly reduced the external economic constraint on the Government.

However, the main French commercial banks — particularly the Big Three, nationalised in 1945 — have relied on a combination of high inflation and interest-free deposits to build up large retail networks and overheads over the past two decades.

Cuts in interest rates caused by disinflation are exerting a new source of cost pressure. This threatens to bite into already-meagre profits just at the time when French banking regulators and the international markets are focusing ever greater attention on the need to boost capital ratios.

It also coincides with a period when the investment community is starting to scrutinise banks' balance sheets much more closely in the light of prospective moves to sell off the most profitable institutions to the private sector.

The squeeze on margins has not yet hit home fully. The banks have made use of the period of increasing real interest rates, during the past two years, to rebuild profitability after the earnings low-point of 1982. But as a result of the downward pressure on base rates, held at 10.25 per cent since July but plainly due to fall soon as a result of the steady drop in money market interest rates since the summer, some of the bigger banks are now starting to feel the profits pinch.

The threat of sanction from disinflation has spurred more effective action by the banks in

## Top 10 French Banks (1984)

World ranking	French ranking (by assets)	Bank	Assets (\$ bn)	Capital (\$ bn)
7	1	BNP	98.99	1.5
9	2	Credit Agricole	92.43	3.83
16	3	Credit Lyonnais	90.56	1.63
11	4	Societe Generale	87.14	1.18
31	5	Cie Fin. de Paribas	56.30	2.04
77	6	CIC Group	27.91	388
83	7	Indosuez	25.32	569
99	8	Banques Parisiennes	20.29	671
109	9	BFCE	18.51	133
117	10	Credit Comm. de France	16.76	313

Source: The Banker

The French Government is firmly set on breaking down barriers between the fragmented sectors of the nation's financial community. The banks meanwhile face challenges which will greatly tax their strength in the coming year.

cutting the growth in their previously burgeoning staff costs.

One of the cluster of objectives avowed by Finance Ministry officials when the state banking sector was widened in 1985 was to prod the banks to control their budgets better. It is ironic that, 31 years later, one of the few overriding nationalisation objectives which has actually been accomplished has resulted in holding down living standards among bank

employees. Moderation in banks' wage settlements — at a time when their overall costs are still being forced up well beyond the inflation rate by purchases of computers and electronic payments equipment — has not been the only illustration of the move to realism in the banking sector.

Mr Laurent Fabius, the present Prime Minister, in his apprenticeship days as Budget



Finance Minister Pierre Berégovoy: everyone will benefit from deregulation

Minister in 1981 originally led an assault on the high level of bank provisions. The Government now admits without ideological hang-ups that high provisions — even though they reduce considerably dividends and other payments made to the state — not only constitute a necessary bulwark against increasing risks on banks' foreign lending, they also help compensate for the traditional lack of capital adequacy of French banks — itself partly a consequence of the state's inability to inject fresh capital into the Big Three over the past 40 years.

The need to boost the banks' capital backing towards accepted international standards is universally recognised. The Bank of France this summer tightened capital adequacy rules, requiring banks to move towards a target of 5 per cent for their capital ratios, defined as perma-

nent capital resources compared with total credits. Nationalised banks have returned to the stock market to raise permanent capital in the form of *titres participatifs* (TPs) (non-voting loan stocks) and, more recently, *certificats d'investissement* (CIs) (non-voting preference shares).

Societe Generale, the bank which has been the most innovative in its financing, led the way with the first CI issue last year, only after wrangling with the Treasury over the possible consequences of bringing in private shareholders (albeit without voting rights) into its capital.

Other banks believe CIs represent a cheaper way of raising capital than TPs — provided, that is, the bank has an adequate profits outlook. Societe Generale, which has also led the way in issuing permanent subordinated debt

to bolster capital resources, has 16 per cent of its capital held by private shareholders as a result of CI warrants attached to its subordinated issue this spring.

The other main area, over which there is also a new-found consensus, concerns deregulation. Mr Pierre Berégovoy, the Finance Minister, and his advisers are firmly set on breaking down barriers between fragmented sectors of the French financial markets.

He is operating within the limits of an extremely regulated system. Exchange controls, despite relaxation in some relatively minor areas, have hardly been touched. But Mr Berégovoy has also initiated or supported other efforts to open up new markets in areas like options and futures trading. And his action coincides with signs of relative liberalism in other financial fields — for instance, the authorisation given to Citibank to buy the Soficam banking group which has branches in Paris and the provinces.

Mr Berégovoy has been trying to convince the financial community that deregulation — even in modest French-style — is, in the words of one top official, "more than a zero sum game"; in other words, that everyone will benefit.

Given the strength of the lobby groups in Mr Berégovoy's path, this has been a difficult message to put across. Even more fundamentally, some seasoned bankers believe that Mr Berégovoy in his deregulatory zeal is not quite aware of the full impact that his measures, if carried to their logical limit, could have in toppling some entrenched pillars of the French banking and financial system.

Bankers question whether the setting up of homogeneous fixed interest debt markets,

CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE

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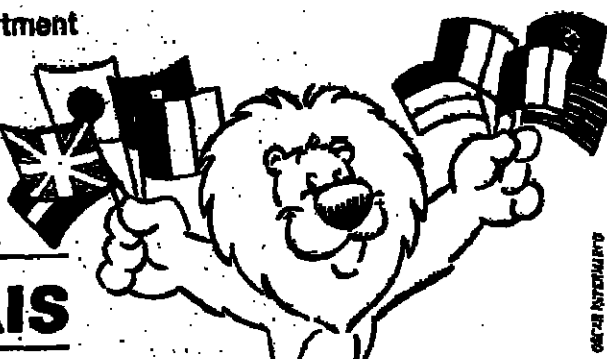
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## FRENCH BANKING 2

# Opposition promises sweeping reforms

## Changes in 1986

DAVID MARSH

WHEN THE Government nationalised 35 commercial banks, and the Suez and Paribas financial holding companies, in February 1982, it also replaced all the chairmen (as well as the heads of the already state-owned Big Three). The new incumbents were not particularly amused to find themselves summoned to the Rue de Rivoli for regular communal talk-ins with Mr Jacques Delors, the Finance Minister.

The Government is now letting out a few notches on the leash holding the nationalised banks. Quietly but symbolically, the Finance Ministry has decided, this year, to phase out the regular gatherings, increasingly regarded by bankers as a waste of time.

The nationalised banks have had to put up with a great deal less interference from ministries during the past two years over industrial intervention. This partly reflects the general ebbing of big corporate problem-cases throughout the economy, now limited, according to one senior banker, to Renault and the still-struggling shipyards.

One nationalised bank in a Government-engineering rescue package in 1983 was forced to enter the capital of a big privately-owned manufacturing company. It has since been able to profit from a rise in the company's stock market price to sell off quietly some of its shares on the bourse.

Indeed, the banks which were forced by the Government to inject capital into the newly-nationalised industrial groups in spring 1982 may now, as a result of a rise in most of the companies' fortunes (and in their prospective denationalisa-

tion divestment price) be sitting on sizeable unrealised investment profits. A semi-consensus has grown up that the system of gentleman's agreements, which have governed relations between the Big Three banks and the state since they were taken into state ownership in 1945, is not the best model for running the rest of the commercial banking system.

The agreements laid down, effectively, that the banks would show compliance with state directives and a willingness to live without new injections of shareholders' capital. In return, the state would be understanding in its requirements for dividends, allowing banks to plough the majority of their profits first, into increasing and remunerating their staff and, over the past few years, into boosting their provisions on risky loans.

### Inefficiencies

It is because of the obvious inefficiencies of this system that any new government which takes office after March 1986 is likely to return progressively to private ownership at least the more profitable banks brought into state ownership in 1982.

The Right, the most likely candidate to take power next year, has promised sweeping denationalisation, including, eventually, the Big Three banks. The Paribas and Suez holding companies and their attached banks, as well as Credit Commercial de France, and smaller profitable banks like Societe Lyonnaise de Banque and Societe Marseillaise de Credit would be the most likely initial denationalisation candidates.

An opposition study group has put an overall capitalisation value on the Big Three state banks of about FF 25bn, with Suez and Paribas likely to re-



Jean-Yves Haberer, former Treasury director and now, chairman of Paribas (right), where profits have continued to rise smoothly since nationalisation. Meanwhile, the Government Opposition is planning wide denationalisation of banks if it wins power next year.

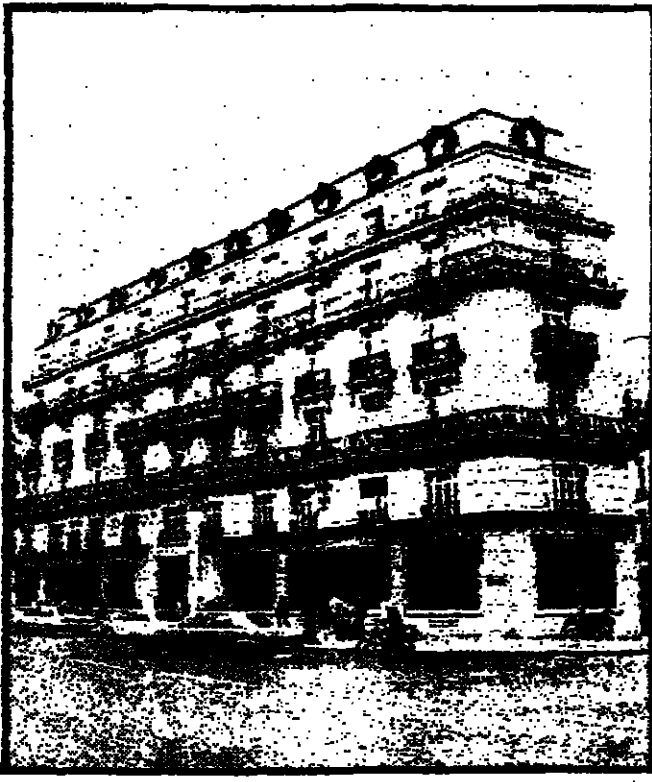
present at least another FF 18bn. Denationalisation fever has already led to a purchase offer being made informally to banks like Indosuez from French and foreign industrial and financial groups. In the expectation that some shares will be sold abroad (although the Right would be expected to place a limit of perhaps 20 per cent).

Several merchant banks in London and New York are trying to prepare themselves to take part in the sell-off.

The Opposition almost certainly has underestimated the difficulties of returning to full private ownership some of the big banks. They owe their top credit ratings abroad not to their relatively slender capital resources but to their backing by a sovereign state shareholder.

A senior director of a leading nationalised bank, himself in favour of denationalisation, points out that his institution has made considerable efforts to increase its capital resources in the last two years. Pointing out that half his balance sheet is in foreign currencies, he says however, he would prefer an intermediary period of three or four years to boost further capital backing, before exposing the bank as a privatised institution to the cold glare of the New York credit rating agencies.

The Opposition's fervour over denationalising the banks taken over in 1982 — which make up



only about 13 per cent of total bank lending throughout the economy — almost certainly misses the main point: over state control of the financial system.

It would be much more important, and certainly more difficult, to break up the monopolistic state organisations of the Caisse des Depots, Post Office and Treasury banking networks which themselves account for more than 30 per cent of the overall banking system.

The most visible way for a new government to try to make an impact on the banks next year will be through changing the chairmen again.

At the Big Three banks, Mr Jean Defassieux, the Socialist chairman of Credit Lyonnais, is a virtual certainty to be replaced if the Right comes to power. Paradoxically, having been a long-standing head of the bank's international network, he is the only chairman of the Credit Lyonnais in recent years to have arrived with a thorough knowledge of the bank.

### Enemies

Mr Rene Thomas at Banque Nationale de Paris may also be in danger, because of his Socialist leanings, even though he has presided over a continued building up of the bank's profits and capital funds. Mr Jacques Mayoux, at Societe Generale, whose waspishly anti-

interventionist views are being increasingly aired in public as the electioneering approach, is a favourite to stay on even though he has himself made enemies on the Right.

Mr Jean-Yves Haberer, the self-confident former Treasury director now chairing Paribas, where profits have continued to rise smoothly since nationalisation, believes he will be allowed to stay on if he wants to after 1986. It is significant, however, that he has failed to develop a rapport with his key executives inherited from the pre-nationalisation period. Mr Jean Peyrelevade, the chairman of Suez, would almost certainly be replaced by the Right because of his former position as chief aide to Mr Pierre Mauroy, the Socialist first Prime Minister.

Mr Peyrelevade has proved himself prudent and a good manager. But the kudos associated with the chairmanships of both Suez and Paribas is sufficiently strong that pretensions to the throne are already being aired around the right wing politicians likely to be France's banking king-makers next year.

Men to watch: here, and on the following page, FT correspondents in Paris feature profiles of three high flyers on the financial scene.

## Highly regarded economist

### Michel Peberreau of CCF

PROFILE BY PAUL BETTS



Michel Peberreau: principal architect in the growth of CCF.

MICHEL PEBERREAU is not as well known as his older brother Georges, the chairman of France's nationalised Compagnie Generale d'Electricite group.

No week goes by without Georges Peberreau's name being mentioned in the French business press, for the CCE chairman is endlessly cooking up some major industrial or business deal. His latest involves an agreement with American Telephone and Telegraph to give the U.S. giant 15 per cent of the French public telephone switching market in return for helping CGE to penetrate the U.S. market.

Far more discreetly and out of the spotlight, Michel Peberreau has been the principal architect in the recent development and growth of Credit Commercial de France (CCF), France's fourth largest commercial bank and the biggest bank to be taken into state ownership by the Socialists in 1982.

As managing director of CCF, Peberreau, who is only 43 years old, has played a major role in pushing the bank into new electronic banking technologies — it is now a leader in this field in France — in developing the group's corporate and Euro-bank business, and increasing its international presence.

Indeed, CCF took control this summer of the London stockbroking firm Laurence Prusi in what represented the first major foray by a large French bank in the

newly deregulated UK financial markets.

Michel Peberreau became a banker by accident. If he had not won the elections in 1981, he would have become the next head of the French Treasury. He had already turned down an offer from former President Giscard d'Estaing to join him as an aide at the Elysée to pursue his career up the French Treasury ladder.

Peberreau was the "directeur de cabinet" of Rene Monory, the former economy minister, between 1973-80, and then headed financial and monetary affairs at the Treasury. "If he had not won, he would have been the directeur du Tresor. There is no question about it," says a close friend of the CCF managing director.

The young CCF banker has the pedigree of French success, having studied at the Ecole Polytechnique and the elitist Ecole Nationale d'Administration, a stable for all leading civil servants in France.

His reputation as an economist is also widely estab-

lished. He lectures at "Sciences-Po" — or the Institut d'etudes politiques de Paris as it is formally known — with a highly regarded course on the instruments of economic policy. Indeed, some students say that his course at "Sciences-Po" is now more popular than the economic course of M Raymond Barre, the former prime minister and one of the leading opposition candidates for the 1985 French presidential election. Peberreau is about to publish his "Sciences-Po" course in a book and is working on another book on inflation.

At CCF he has also maintained continuity by staying at the bank after the Socialist government decided to replace M Daniel Deleury, the bank's chairman, with M Claude Jouven. The Government's decision not to renew M Deleury's mandate as chairman last year considerably upset the bank's managers and their morale.

Peberreau could have left the bank at the time but preferred to stay on. M Jacques Calvet, the chairman of the private Peugeot group, asked Peberreau to join him, especially to help with the recovery efforts at Peugeot's large Citroen division.

When M Calvet was chairman of Banque Nationale de Paris, France's largest commercial bank, before the left came to power, he had also asked Peberreau to come to work for him at BNP. At the time, Peberreau had his sights fixed on the top Treasury job. It would not be at all surprising to see Peberreau bring offered the chairman's job at BNP or of one of the other "big three" banks (BNP, Societe Generale, Credit Lyonnais) if the opposition, as is widely expected, wins the majority in next year's general elections.

## A man with dynamic ideas

### Jean-Pierre Huchon of Credit Agricole

PROFILE BY DAVID MARSH



Jean-Pierre Huchon: "I want to give the bank fresh drive," he says.

CREDIT Agricole, the farmers' co-operative bank, has more than doubled the capital of the Banque Nationale de Paris. It manages the largest volume of unit trusts and mutual funds of any French institution.

Next year, it will be leading the way in distributing memory-containing "smart" cards around the country for uses like cashless shopping and giving access to videotext services. Yet there is still some doubt whether it is really a bank.

The aim of Mr Jean-Pierre Huchon, the chief executive and managing director since January of the group's central organisation, the Caisse Nationale de Credit Agricole, is to dispel those doubts.

Mr Huchon, formerly the chief aide of Mr Michel Rocard, Minister of Agriculture in the Socialist Government before he resigned in April, is only 39. He also will be regarded by many on the right as a political appointment, and therefore may face the danger of eviction if the Opposition wins power after next year's elections.

On the other hand, he has been looking after agricultural affairs during a long period of his civil service career, under both right and left wing governments. And his ideas on injecting new dynamism into the structure and operations of the "Green Giant" are not likely to be basically at odds with those of any new government after March 1986.

### Impressive

Credit Agricole has been able to build up its impressive resources — it has a capital ratio of 7.5 per cent, mouth-wateringly good by French banking standards — as a result of privileges awarded by the Government to back its special function of distributing subsidised loans to the farming community.

However, as Mr Huchon is at pains to point out, since 1978, the bank's fiscal and other privileges have gradually been stripped away.

It is also competing ever more closely with commercial banks, moving into towns from rural areas in a way which has sent alarm bells ringing among some members of the established banking community. The bank's FF 2.5bn issue of titres participatifs (non-voting stock) launched on the stock market in October — making use of a change in the law in July allowing co-operative groups to make such issues — underlines, Mr Huchon says, its need to go to the market place to raise funds just like any other bank.

Credit Agricole's clientele has traditionally been rural-based and of modest means. Mr Huchon's aim is to continue the bank's gradual drive up-

market by expanding its share of consumer credit, where it has only 6 to 7 per cent of the banking market at present, much less than its potential.

In its main-line agriculture business, he says, the emphasis will in future be in providing increased quality in services to the farming community, rather than simply increasing loans. Its expertise in financing agri-food trade and business ventures also, he believes, gives the bank a solid way of building up progressively its international activities, now making up about 15 per cent of the balance sheet.

Credit Agricole should also capitalise further, he says, on its decentralised structure by expanding further its regional

support for high performance small businesses.

Mr Huchon this summer put into effect a movement to set up at the bank, which is formally under the control of the Finance and Agriculture Ministries. He has brought in several previous top advisers from Socialist ministerial teams.

"I wanted to give the bank fresh drive — it's necessary that people should move," he says, adding that most directors who were moved around within the bank favoured the change.

Since 1973, Credit Agricole had previously had only two new recruits to its directorate team, and was plainly in need of new blood. The hope is that not too much of this will be split in 1986.

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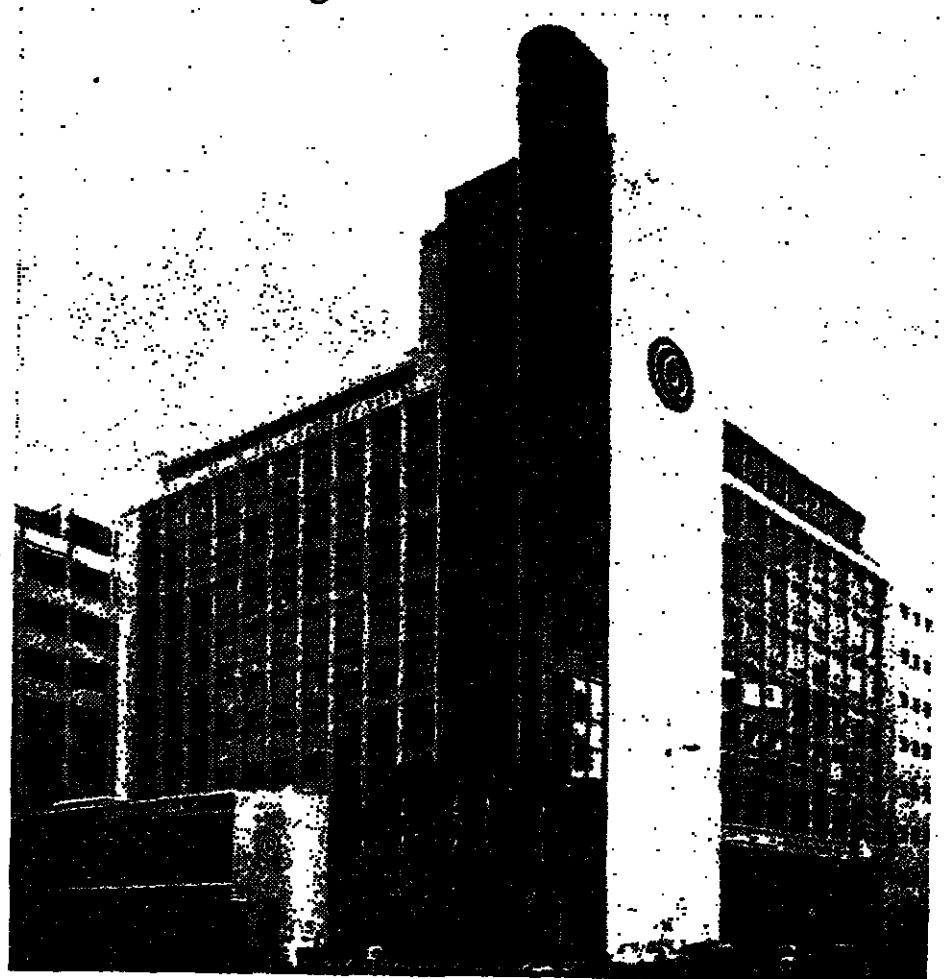
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## FRENCH BANKING 4

## Pressure mounts to modernise system

## The Paris Bourse

DAVID MARSH

AFTER AN unexpected and unprecedented boom during the past three years, the Paris bourse is bracing itself for a period of challenges which could transform the French financial landscape.

The wave of deregulation affecting London and New York, threatening Paris and other Continental bourses with possible migration of business to better equipped, lower-cost financial centres, is producing its own ripples in Paris. This has been the principal—but not the only—source of pressure on Paris to modernise its stock market.

The other main factor has been the increasing impatience of the French banks with a system which leaves all the main bourse dealing cards in the hands of the protected stockbroking community.

With French banks moving increasingly into securities operations to compensate for ebbing profitability in traditional commercial banking, and a cluster of hungry and well-capitalised foreign securities companies planning inroads into

the Paris market, French stockbrokers know they are under attack from several sides at once.

The Finance Ministry at present has no intention of tampering with the monopoly which dates from 1807, granting stockbrokers the exclusive right to carry out Paris securities trading. The surge in volumes over the past three years—bond trading has risen more than sixfold since 1981, equities dealing has nearly doubled—has led to a big increase in brokers' profits. The receipts have been ploughed into a mixture of new investment in information technology, improving the brokers' slender capital backing and enriching partners and their staff.

## Commissions

However, there are signs that the future will be facing tougher times. The Socialist Government, which for some time had been casting a jaundiced eye on big increases in the stockbrokers' income (the actual commission rates are in fact low compared with other world stock markets), this summer took action to cut commissions paid to the brokers by banks in bond market deals.

The measure, which came into effect in July, has probably

reduced stockbrokers' income from negotiated securities deals by 20 to 25 per cent. Such trading is the source of about 70 per cent of most brokers' overall incomes.

Banks and brokers will also be competing on an equal footing in the futures market for bonds and short-term financial instruments when trading becomes fully operational in September next year. The starting date for the initial phase of the market, originally set for September this year, has been postponed for several months because of delays in setting-up a computerised dealing system. But the market is expected to get under way by the beginning of the New Year.

New rules enlarging possibilities for stock market participants to act as principals and carry out jobbing functions, announced in October by the Stockbrokers Association and the Association of French Banks, amount to another step intensifying competition between the two professionals.

Most banks, including the Paribas and Suez investment banks as well as several foreign institutions like Citibank, are interested in playing a role in jobbing, where opportunities for taking positions in shares and bonds will become much more important than previously.

But banks are generally un-

enthusiastic about the idea of setting up joint dealing companies with stockbrokers. Plainly brokers—which need access to banks' capital to play an active role in market-making—have more to gain than the banks from such associations.

Banks believe that forging alliances with particular brokers would constrain their present ability to choose the best services from the roughly 40 members of the stockbroking community. Other bankers are afraid that the new jobbing trading rules could leave them exposed to absorbing large blocks of shares unloaded by dealers trading on the basis of insider information—an indication that the Paris bourse could still do a lot to ensure that information travels at the same speed for all participants.

A general view is that the jobbing rules represent only an interim solution to the problem of reinforcing market liquidity and shaking up competition. In the long run, modification of the stockbrokers' privileged status—which could involve steps, like in London to open up the brokers' capital to both banks and non-banks—would seem to be inevitable.

The man in the middle of the bourse cross-currents is Xavier Dupont, chairman of the French Stockbrokers' Association.

As evidence of the market's willingness to face up to its challenges, he cites not only co-operation with banks over futures trading and jobbing, but also the plan to move to continuous computerised trading (probably from about 10 o'clock to 4 o'clock) next year in a selection of the most active stocks.

Trial runs are already being made using the computers of the Toronto Stock Exchange. Mr Dupont is aware that, once continuous trading is introduced, replacing the present somewhat primitive fixing system, competition from foreign market-makers in key stocks might increase rather than diminish.

## Trading times

But he says with a smile: "To do nothing would be an even greater risk." The bourse also plans a morning trading session sometime next year to supplement the present two-hour midday trading spell.

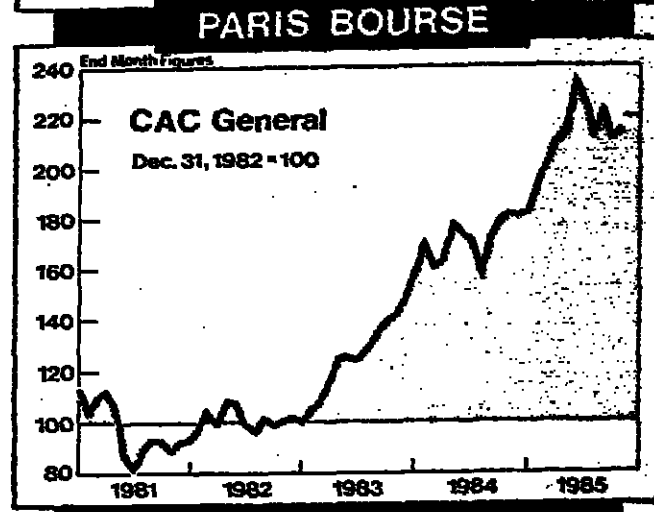
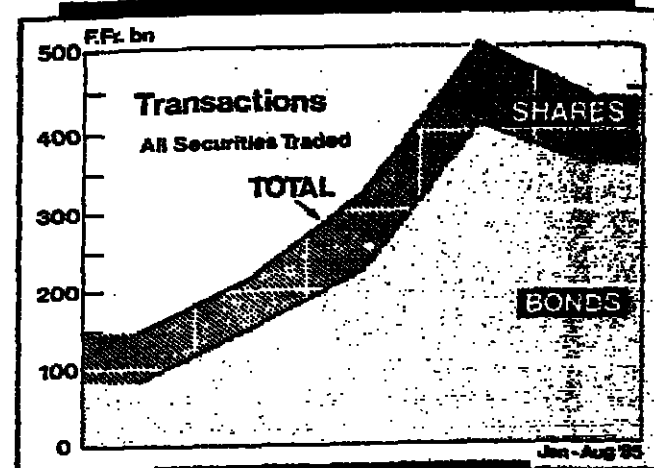
After rises in the stock market index of 56 per cent in 1983, and 16.5 per cent last year, the bourse has risen about 16 per cent this year, in spite of some underperformance since the summer. Mr Dupont classifies the downturn in prices over the last few months as a "natural correction." One important reason seems to have been that foreign institutions, which

have been in the forefront of the price surge since March 1983, have since June been less enthusiastic in their assessment of the outlook of the Paris exchange.

Uncertainties ahead of the general elections next March have driven a number of companies, this autumn, to advance rights issues and other capital raising operations. This has led to a heavy issue calendar since the beginning of September. There has also been some indigestion in the last few weeks on the second marché, which now boasts more than 100 stocks (including about 20 transferred from a previous unlisted section of the stock market when the second marché was opened in February 1983).

Mr Dupont believes the swing in the Socialists' economic policies since March 1983 and the switch in French investors' attitudes away from the traditional refuges of property and gold, leave the market in a "healthy" position.

As for the possibility of denationalisations from next year onwards, he says France will have to come up with investment incentives to back specific issues along the lines of the innovations used to sell British Telecom in the UK. He adds, the re-sale of French state enterprises is an opportunity rather than a worry for the Paris bourse.



## Big move towards cashless banking

## Electronic applications

DAVID MARSH

FRANCE OVER the past 12 months has taken great strides towards setting up a nationwide electronic payment system which could give the country a world lead in cashless banking technology.

Considerable questions still have to be answered over the financing of an estimated FF1 bn investment in electronic payments hardware in the next four or five years. But there is no doubt about the wholehearted commitment of the Government and the banks to setting up a system based on the "smart" micro-chip card invented by a Frenchman in 1974.

The banks succeeded in overcoming traditional feuding and rivalries in July 1984 by agreeing to set up a standardised credit card system linking the commercial banks, the Post Office and savings network and the big Credit Agricole farmers' co-operative institution.

A further important step was taken in September with the signing of an initial order from the inter-bank Carte Rancire grouping for 12.4m CP-8 smart cards with the nationalised computer group Bull.

Starting with a project to issue 3m smart cards to customers in four regions of France by the end of last year, the cards should be distributed completely around France by 1989. The total investment of FF1 bn represents the cost of

18m cards at FF36 each as well as 200,000 "athetectors" to be installed in shops to "read" the personal code contained in the card to verify customers' transactions, as well as other items of equipment.

Banks will also pay for adaptation of existing terminals fitted in stores but new machines which can cost FF12,500 each to produce and install, are presumed to be acquired at the cost of the retailing profession.

The smart card, a rectangle of plastic containing an in-built micro-processor and memory, can be used not only to carry out financial transactions. Its other purposes range from making phone calls to carrying health records and controlling access to computer systems and buildings.

The economic significance of the French banks' programme spreads well beyond the country's borders.

## Standards

France has been heartened by news in October that the International Standard Organisation has agreed to adopt the CP-8 norm as an international standard. Bull, which uses technology developed by the French inventor Mr Roland Moreno, has up to now been keenly aware of the competition to impose a rival U.S. or Japanese standard.

Mastercard, the U.S.-based international credit card group, during the summer has been carrying out comparative tests using cards produced both by Bull and Casio of Japan, while Visa and American Express are also testing the French technology. French

success in building up a strong domestic base for the smart card could thus provide an important springboard for selling the technology abroad above all in the U.S.

Mr Moreno has also been in contact with a number of Japanese electronics groups which could lead to the licensing of French smart card technology in Japan.

Successful introduction of the micro chip card in France will, however, depend crucially on agreement with the retail trade on installing cashless shopping terminals throughout the country. The 1984 link-up between the banks and a subsequent agreement on aligning credit card tariffs was denounced by retailers as leading to a bankers' cartel.

Headlock over the tariff structure, which at one point threatened to hold up installation of terminals in shops and stores, has been broken with an agreement at the end of September under which tariffs paid by retailers on credit card transactions will be worked out on the basis of case by case negotiations.

But some bankers have been voicing doubts that competitive pressure, forcing down commissions, could greatly lower the eventual profitability of the electronic payment system seen above all as cutting the huge processing costs French banks face through the writing out each year of between 4bn and 5bn cheques.

The September accord opened the way for banks in some regions—notably the Strasbourg area—to start setting basic commissions for credit card transactions at around 0.4 per cent of the amount involved,

compared with tariffs in the past of around 1.5 to 2 per cent.

A free for all tariff war, if it eventually breaks out, seems likely to be led by Credit Agricole. With 7.5m traditional credit cards in circulation (to be exchanged completely for smart cards over two or three years starting from next spring), the farmers' co-operative bank has about as many credit card customers as all the other banks (mainly grouped in the Carte Bleue organisation) put together.

## Initiatives

Credit Agricole is in the vanguard of efforts to find financing initiatives to help retailers install smart card terminals. It has been lobbying for backing of low-interest rate government loans from the Industrial Modernisation Fund. Out of a FF300m loan which could be put towards financing acquisition of terminals, the bank believes its share would be 20 to 30 per cent.

Underpinning the rate at which France is wiring itself up for electronic banking, the French Banks Association estimates that 42,000 point of sale terminals were installed or ordered as of mid-1985. Of these 25,000 were linked to the Carte Bleue organisation and 17,000 to the mutual and co-operative networks (Carte Verte).

Extension of the network of terminals over the past 12 months has been held up both by arguments over tariffs and by shortages of hardware. The aim is to increase the number to between 70,000 and 100,000 by the end of the decade. This compares with 27,500

machines at end 1984 and only 8,000 at end 1983.

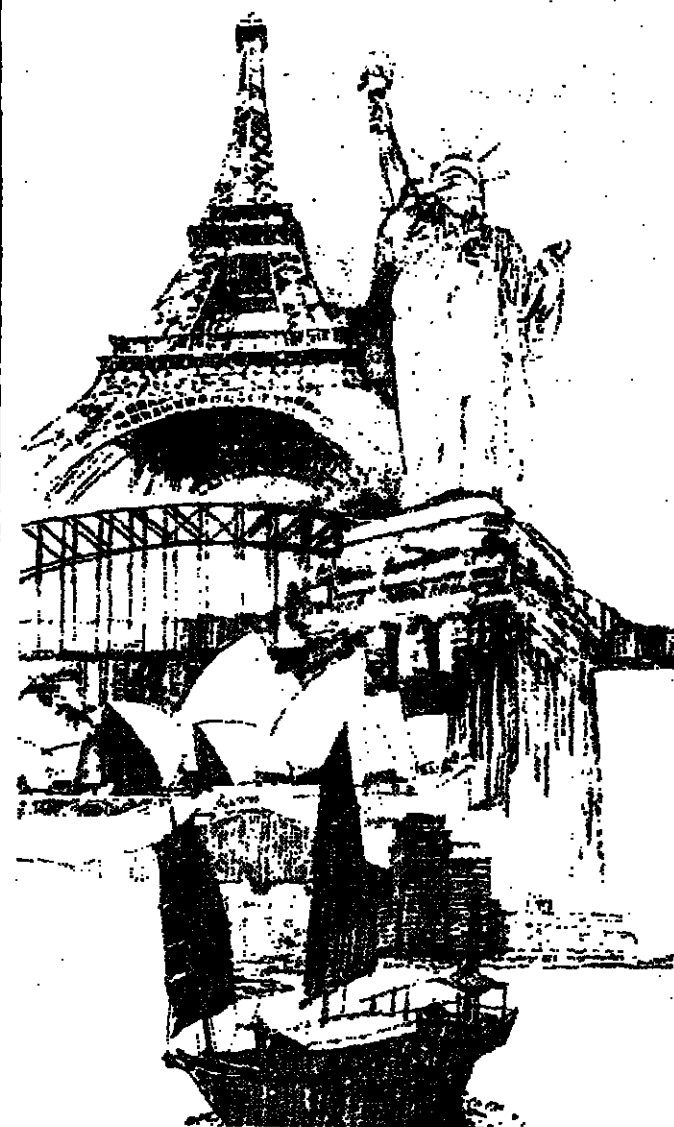
Installations of automatic banknote dispensers and telling machines, by contrast, has been tapering off with an estimated 8,700 units in place as of mid-1985, against 7,200 at end 1984 and 5,000 at end 1983. Self-service banking machines are now installed at a ratio of one to every 6,500 inhabitants, a greater penetration than in the rest of Europe and one which bankers regard as approaching a maximum.

Self-service banking terminals installed in the home, by contrast, are clearly just taking off. The move is being spearheaded by progressive installation around the country of the Minitel terminals, financed by the Direction Generale des Telecommunications as part of

France's drive to popularise videotex services.

More than 800,000 Minitels have been installed, with over 100,000 used for financial services. Roughly 30 banks offer Minitel-based services under which customers can interrogate their accounts, make transfers and check the value of investment portfolios.

More sophisticated services are being developed above all for company treasurers, who make up about 12 to 15 per cent of Minitel users. But even assuming a tenfold increase in the number of financial services users over the next two years, home banking customers will still total only around 1.5m at end 1987, underlining that this market will remain a rapid growth sector for many years to come.



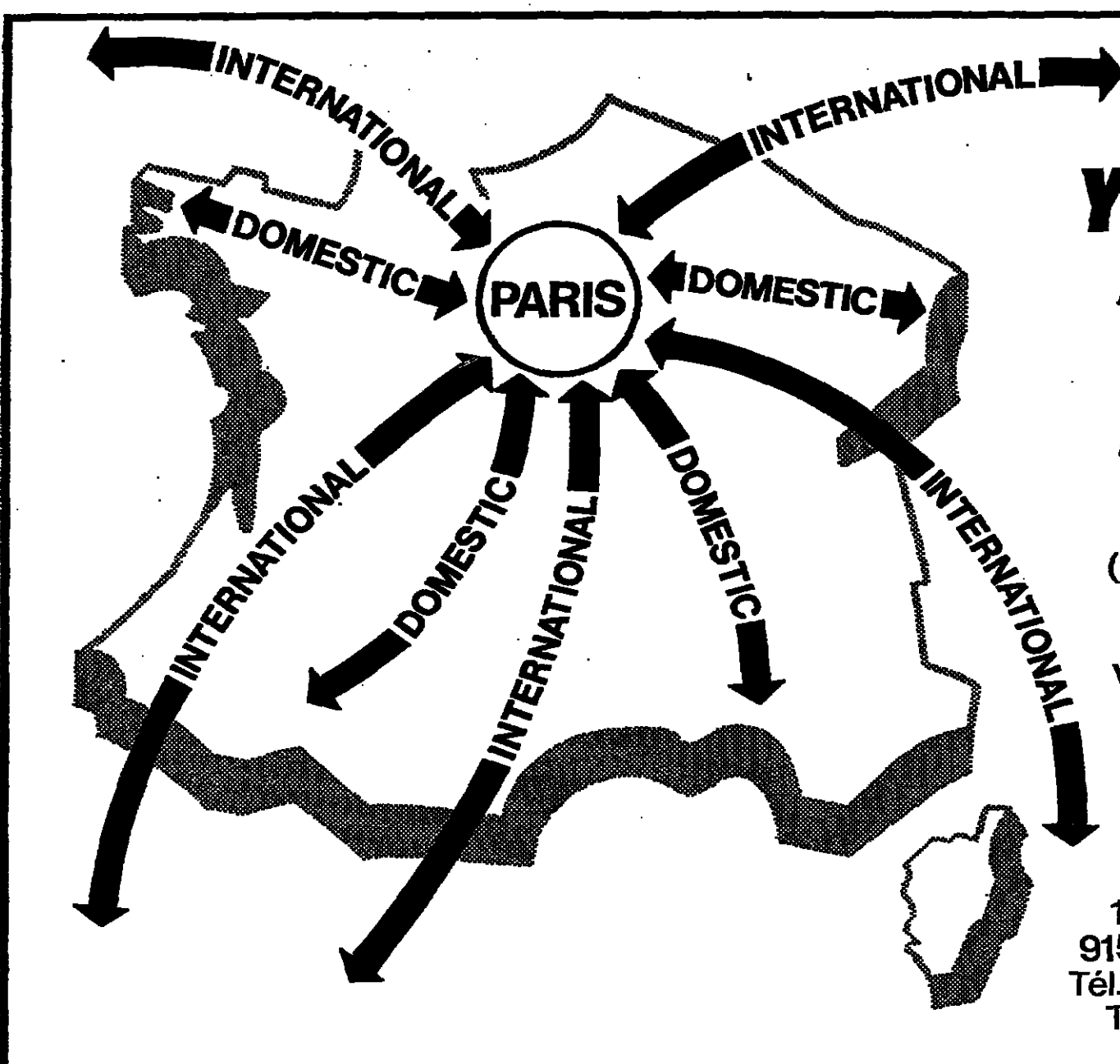
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## THE ARTS

Television/Christopher Dunkley

## Diary of a critic's arduous week

For the critic the trouble with television is that it never lets up. What is more, there is an increasing number of matters to occupy his attention off screen. My week begins with the writing of this column on a Monday. After completing last week's column I began keeping a diary.

**MONDAY**  
At the ICA in London the Arts Council shows the winners in its first-ever "New Film and Video Artists' Prizes" scheme: a mixture of the pretentious and the professional. Unfortunately the very idea is undermined by the decision to judge only by the work of recently graduated students. If these films and videos are incapable of communicating to anyone over 21 what on earth is the value of them?

How odd that in one evening ITV should show one of the best programmes of the year promptly followed by one of the worst. Granada's World Is Action special on the six men imprisoned for the Birmingham pub bombing is an outstanding example of what can be done with investigative journalism on television. On the basis of work carried out by Charles Tremayne, Chris Mullin and Eamon O'Connell, Producer Ian McBride builds up a devastating case for—at the very least—a retrial. Almost certainly the wrong men are in gaol (even the IRA says they did not do it and the IRA does not make a habit of disclaiming their convicted bombers) and

being kept there, it seems, because the authorities need someone to take the blame.

Television is a desperately unwieldy tool for this sort of work, point a quartz iodine sun-gun, a camera and a gun-mike at most people, even the innocent, and they dodge round the nearest corner. Yet by using every technique from dramatised reconstruction to clandestine sound recordings in gaol, World Is Action produces an immensely impressive document. It is appalling that Fleet Street has virtually abandoned this sort of investigation and has taken it up. Encouraging, too, to find that ITV can put this sort of tough material on screen when the BBC comes so unstuck with *Real Lives*.

**TUESDAY**

Review copies of three books arrive. The first is utilitarian, the third edition of *Who on Television* (ITV Books/Michael Joseph £5.95). The first edition, priced at 4 shillings, listed Simon Dee, Wilfred Pickles and the rest of Caroline Blackwood's list. All these are absent from the new edition. So is BBC newsreader Julia Somerville, though ITN newsreader Paul Armstrong is in, and while Mel Smith is listed ("favourite place: bed") Griff Rhys Jones is not. The choice of "1,000 of the best known names on British television" is pretty catholic, however: from darts player Jocky Wilson to Margaret Thatcher.

The second is funny: *Coming To You Live!* (Methuen £5.50) is a collection of anecdotes from the early days of television, ranging from the way the white rats were made up with Lechner No 3 for 1984 to the way that Polly Elwes drove a school of Herring into people's gardens so they could eat chrysanthemums for the Tonight cameras.

The third—*TV News: Whose Bias?* by Professor Martin Harrison (Policy Journals £12.50)—is a long and detailed examination of the work of the Glasgow Media Group in their "Bad News" books which accused television news of

being biased in favour of the status quo and against unions. This new book will be welcomed by television news executives but, to those of us who always said the Glasgow group was more full of bias and special pleading than television news, it seems somewhat unnecessary.

To Television Centre in the evening for a dinner thrown by director-general Alasdair Milne to mark the retirement of Gunter Ruge, one of the great personalities of the corporation, who was for years chief film buyer; he captured *Gone With the Wind* and *The Sound of Music*. Now he is going into cable programming on his own account, with Adam Singer, son of Aubrey. He gives an extraordinarily clever speech and then every guest around the table.

**WEDNESDAY**  
Weekly column appears. Day of rest. Decide to relax by watching *Allo 'Allo!*, *Full House*, *Girls on Top*, *Up The Elephant And Round The Castle* and *Happy Families* for farcical comedy on situation comedies. Turns out to be hardest work of the week. *Happy Families* obviously in wrong batch of tapes: not a comedy at all.

On BBC2 *Brass Tacks* tries to establish whether the British police are using new paramilitary tactics against crowds. They show that the Police behaved appallingly at Manchester University in March, but the broader question remains in doubt. The analysis of the 1983 Grosvenor Square demonstration with former Chief Constable John Alderson, which seeks to suggest how well-managed the police were in those days, is utterly misleading. It ignores those areas where the police were methodically beating demonstrators to the ground, kicking heads and so on.

**THURSDAY**  
40 Minutes is an unusually moving account of an odd life: that of Michael Cooper. Producer Philippe Walker, and film editor Charles Chabot cut with telling effect between a 10-year-old BBC programme about Cooper's childhood proclivities to arson and new material about his efforts today to become a professional magician. Without ever broaching the subject formally, this programme speaks volumes about institutionalised lives.

Channel 4 has made the *Booker* Prize its own, thanks largely to Melvyn Bragg. When you think of the disaster the BBC achieved two years ago when they drafted in Selena Scott, and then consider Hermione Lee's deft handling today of the live phone-in to the winner in Salt Lake City ("Bloody hell," she said in her quaint antipodean way) you do begin to wonder about the BBC's supposedly special abilities.

**FRIDAY**  
Saddest news of the week is the death of Phil Silvers, one of the few true masters of television, known the world over as "Bilko," the conniving master-servant from *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*. Silvers' early life in vaudeville gave him an understanding of the ordinary man which is invaluable in television comedy.

On Britain's *East End* has a similar understanding. Silvers added to that an instinctive knowledge of how to play to an audience via a television camera; a skill which is different from that of stage or cinema comedy techniques, and seemingly far more rare. Lucille Ball and Eric Morecambe are the only two performers I have ever seen who came close to Silvers' mastery and both, I believe, learnt much from watching him, whether or not they realised it. The 133 episodes of *Bilko* are a priceless legacy to the world.

**SATURDAY**  
To be able to speak to camera unaffectedly and with such enthusiasm and to do so interestingly, is a fair amount as rare as Silvers'. Jack Hargreaves has always had it (his fascinating rural series *Out of Town*, now called *Old Country*, is screened at 6.00 on Mondays on Channel 4) and today in *Hannibal's Footsteps*—Channel 4 again—Bernard Levin proves that he still has it. Whether on tour, wine, Don Corleone, truffle-hunting, or the monastic life, Levin's unscripted pronouncements are wholly absorbing.

The South African Government announces that merely burying its own citizens' heads in the sand by preventing domestic television coverage of the country's troubles has not worked. Henceforth they intend to see that the rest of us bury our heads in the sand too. For a while the play will succeed: there will be fewer



Bernard Levin—striding out in Hannibal's footsteps

horrible scenes of South African police whipping demonstrators and jumping out of unmarked lorries to shoot them. But then it will become counter-productive. Every ambitious television news team in the world will compete to get clandestine pictures, preferably reflecting badly upon the South African authorities.

**SUNDAY**  
Television seems to have an uncanny ability to roll history out like pastry until it is the same old over: same thickness, same texture, same colour (monochrome). The events even seem to lie about the same distance in the past, although the new series starting today on Channel 4 (again) *The Writing On The Wall* is dealing with the period of my own adult life. Starting with the Wilson years and devolving, it covers the beginnings of Northern Ireland's "recent" trouble, the Grosvenor Square demonstration (complete with kicking

and punching from the police) and de Gaulle's repeated "non." Robert Kee's script is lucid and literate, and Cate Haste's production admirably smooth. The sequence in which film of a platform of speakers is which and everyone except Enoch Powell is electronically dimmed, typifies the attention which has been paid to detail. Weekly column in morning.

## Bursaries to jazz musicians

The Arts Council has awarded nearly £18,000 in bursaries to 21 jazz musicians. The grants, from £400 to £1,500, go to enable projects including the percussionist Paul Hession's work with improvising musicians in Germany and Emond Selwyn's transcription and annotation of the recorded works of the American jazz guitarist Tal Farlow.

## The Great White Hope/Tricycle

Michael Coveney

The Tricycle in Kilburn appears to be going for broke with this British premiere of Howard Sackler's 1968 Broadway hit about the first black heavyweight champion Jack Johnson. A cast of 27, an ambitious design, 18 scenes: a programme polemic claims that once the GLC is disbanded next April, such things will not be seen again on such stages.

This may well be true. At the same time, Nicolas Kent's production is the sort of large-scale affair the fringe has studiously backed away from for years. This is Lyttelton time, and it is not the meanness of comments to suggest that the Kilburn show compares more than favourably with the National's own boxing play *Extravaganza*, Golden Boy.

So does Sackler, who died three years ago, will put alongside Odets. The James Earl Jones movie of his play was indeed a very fine one, but it is exhilarating to be reminded of a platform of speakers in which and everyone except Enoch Powell is electronically dimmed, typifies the attention which has been paid to detail. Weekly column in morning.

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## G5 deal needs more zip

IS THERE or is there not a "secret agreement" between the G5 finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of Five leading industrialised countries? Must have got thoroughly fed up with this question, ever since the sudden announcement in September that the G5 had agreed on co-ordinated intervention to push the dollar down towards the foreign exchanges. Despite the obvious unlikelihood that finance ministers would wish to share their "secrets" with the general public, the markets have found it hard to resist the steady stream of rumours about the real horse-trading that went on at the G5 meeting in New York.

The latest revelation, that the G5 agreement was not a "non-intervention" but a "Group of Two" — the US and Japan: the Federal Reserve Board and the Bank of Japan would push the dollar/yen exchange rate down in 1986 or even lower. Meanwhile, Europe's finance ministers would remain on the sidelines, perhaps making the odd market sortie to confuse the speculators, but basically staying on with business as before. There may well be some truth in this interpretation of the G5 agreement — a statement which is not based on any existing conspiracy theory or leaked agenda from the G5 meeting, but from a more mundane observation. The G5 agreement probably amounts to less — more — than meets the eye.

The fact is that there is still precious little recognition in any of the major industrialised countries, the US and Japan included, that domestic policies, as well as international ones, must change if balance is to be restored to the global economy. The G5 meeting may have marked a turning point in the philosophical view of the American and British treasuries, which were both forced to eat a lot of words about the futility of intervention and the logical incoherence of the concept of "overvaluation" in freely competitive currency markets.

Economic policies, however, are ultimately determined not by economists, but by politicians. And even if Mr Nigel Lawson, the British Chancellor, has gradually been persuaded of the benefits of currency stability, while Mr Beryl Spink, the devoutly free-market US under-secretary for monetary affairs, has been quickly removed from the treasury, there has been little change in basic political convictions at the level

of President Reagan. Mrs Thatcher or Mr Helmut Kohl. This means in practice that there is little chance of the G5 finance ministers reaching an agreement about "securitising" the technicalities of intervention policy for the simple reason that the key decisions on taxes and public spending had been ruled out of bounds by their political bosses, the heads of government of the industrialised world. This does not necessarily imply, as is sometimes held in the markets, that the G5's currency efforts are ultimately doomed to failure.

Intervention alone can have a major psychological effect and if it is supported by a "non-intervention" monetary policy, it amounts, by its definition, to a change in the economic fundamentals. In the past few weeks the Japanese government has shown that it is prepared to accept the monetary changes required by the G5 intervention agreement. Mr Poehl's statement on Monday implied that Germany was not prepared to change its monetary policy, which is not altogether surprising since, in political terms, it is Japan, not Germany, which finds itself in U.S. Congressmen's protectionist firing line.

## Imbalance

What all this indicates, however, is that the G5 agreement is being faithfully observed by the Japanese and ignored by the Germans. Rather it suggests that the agreement needs to be substantially expanded. What Germany needs is not a monetary tightening, as part of co-ordinated intervention against the dollar, but a fiscal relaxation, as part of a coordinated switch in fiscal policies, involving America, Europe and Japan. Germany's current account surplus, at roughly 2 per cent of GDP, is clearly excessive by any historical standards, even if it pales beside Japan's surplus of 3.5 per cent of GDP. Taking Europe as a whole, the current account surplus is \$41bn projected for next year by the IMF should be viewed as a serious global imbalance, on a scale comparable to Japan's projected surplus of \$57bn.

In the present fragile state of the world economy, it would be unwise to attempt to tighten its monetary policies in an attempt to help the dollar downwards. But this is not an argument against co-ordinated intervention; it is an argument for bringing fiscal policies, including the budgetary shibboleths of politicians in Germany, Japan and even Britain clearly into the arena of international discussion.

## Rearguard of Sabbatarianism

EVEN before it is formally announced in the Queen's Speech today, the Government's proposal to legalise Sunday retail trading seems to be arousing more opposition than anything else the Government proposes. It is strange and sad that such passions should still focus on this hoary old issue, and especially surprising that a number of Tory MPs seem to have joined the old coalition of Sabbatarians and trade unionists. Mrs Thatcher must sometimes wonder how far she has really changed attitudes in the country, when the opposition is still wobbly on the merits of a market economy.

The Sabbatarians can surely swing few votes, when even Scotland, with its Puritan traditions, has led the way to greater trading freedom. The rest of us may respect their self-denying virtues, and they will clearly not be throwing the shops on Sundays; but they have no more right to impose their views on the country than, say, the vegetarians, another austere and respectable minority.

## Philosophy

The main objections, however, rest not on good fundamentalist religion, but on bad economics. It is variously argued that Sunday opening will lead to the exploitation of workers, that it will divert staff for Sunday opening, and that it will raise prices. The truth is that Sunday opening will in no way affect the exploitation of workers, that it will divert staff for Sunday opening, and that it will raise prices. The truth is that Sunday opening will in no way affect the exploitation of workers, that it will divert staff for Sunday opening, and that it will raise prices.

This last point is absolutely fundamental to the philosophy of the present Government, which starts from the fact that the major engine of economic growth throughout the ages has been the creation and exploitation of trading opportunities. This may not be the whole truth; but a belief in trading does

not rule out the possibility that government demand management has a role to play, as government rhetoric sometimes suggests. It is certainly a great relief to the country, however, that the idea that the Government alone determines the level of trade, which can subsequently be shared out, if that were the case, the shopkeepers could logically campaign for a four-day week. Conservatives especially should think twice or more before they vote for this lump-of-trade fallacy.

The price argument is equally hollow. Some stores may well raise prices to cover the cost of Sunday opening; nobody need pay them; others will seize an opportunity to turn over their capital more quickly. Customers could logically campaign for a four-day week. Conservatives especially should think twice or more before they vote for this lump-of-trade fallacy.

There is also a strong social argument for Sunday opening. In all the industrial economies, but most of all the UK, recent years have seen a rapid and welcome growth in jobs and opportunities for women — which is one reason why unemployment among men remains so distressingly high. It is quite illogical to have shops open when most people are at work, and closed for most of their leisure time. More flexible trading hours could also help customers and trade. This might even create new leisure opportunities for shopworkers; nothing compels stores to open, so many do, when there are hardly any customers about.

The Bill will be welcome, then but where is its companion? The Government is still studying the even older question of licensing hours, despite evidence from Puritan Scotland — not to mention supposedly hard-drinking Australia — that liberty here does not mean licence in the wrong sense. Market economies can be harsh, but can also be fun. The Government should accentuate the positive.

## Africa and the IMF

## The patient is ready for a new prescription

By Patti Waldmeir

THE IMF does not care whether you are suffering economic malaria. They will always give you quinine. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia's very commentary on the methods of an organisation which is widely viewed in Africa as a peculiar amalgam of stern physician, harsh prohibition officer and neo-colonialist exploiter must have raised a chuckle from many a beleaguered African central bank governor or sober Finance Minister — after a quick glance down the corridor to ensure that the resident IMF representative was not within earshot.

For throughout most of black Africa, "IMF" is a household name. While the legendary "market mummies" of Accra (their folds of flesh often concealing vast sums of money gained through trading), or the pidgin-speaking taxi drivers of Lagos may not be able to quote its full name, they are in no doubt as to what these three initials stand for — austerity.

The Fund's presence in Africa as a major financier, rare up until the late 1970s, has since grown to the point where 37 countries out of 50 in sub-Saharan Africa have had to turn to it for balance of payments support in the past five years. Overall, the Fund extended some SDR 5.53bn (£6.29bn) in loans to the region between 1980 and 1984, some of which are now falling due and are in some cases (notably Zambia and Sudan), already overdue.

Those countries worst hit by Africa's current economic crisis have scarcely any hope of repaying these debts in the next decade without borrowing the money to do so from other official sources. For them, Fund lending has only increased their already intolerable burden of short-term debt.

The success of failure of the IMF's austerity prescription for Africa — vigorously debated for some years in the Continent's press, its bars and its diplomatic cocktail parties — now appears to have become a major source of concern among the continent's leaders. Western backers as well.

With vast areas of the continent sunk in an economic crisis of unprecedented depth the IMF's role in Africa has come under sharp scrutiny. The recent annual meetings of the IMF's African department, Justin Zulu: "Restoring financial stability can generate confidence that will encourage foreign investors and lead to private sector capital inflows. As recent experience shows, the West, and particularly foreign creditors and donors

the US, gave notice of a new growth-oriented approach to economic adjustment in Africa. Implicit in this change of strategy is a judgment that IMF austerity programmes alone are inadequate to deal with the long-term structural imbalances which characterise most of Africa's economic crises.

The IMF's stock argument that the "mixed performance" of its policies in Africa is the result of poor implementation by recipient governments — crudely put, that failure is the result of too little IMF medicine, not too much — would appear to have lost some credibility.

The experiences of three countries widely viewed as major test cases for the Fund in Africa — Zaire, Ghana and Zambia — cannot have been far from the minds of those Western bureaucrats who argued for a new approach in Seoul. They are among the continent's worst economic disaster stories — but also among those countries which have gone furthest along the road to IMF-inspired economic reform.

The economic histories of the three provide an inventory of the mistakes and misfortunes which have precipitated Africa's economic and political crisis. The three countries enjoy vastly different levels of natural and created wealth, political backgrounds and political problems which have little in common. What they share (apart from the resident IMF representative down the corridor) is a degree of desperation which has left them little option but to make a serious and sustained effort to administer the IMF's medicine.

Conclusions about the impact of IMF policies in these countries are extraordinarily difficult to draw, largely because of what the IMF dryly terms "unforeseen developments." Drought in Ghana, copper price movements in Zambia and donor reticence in Zaire make it difficult to apportion either praise or blame with any degree of confidence.

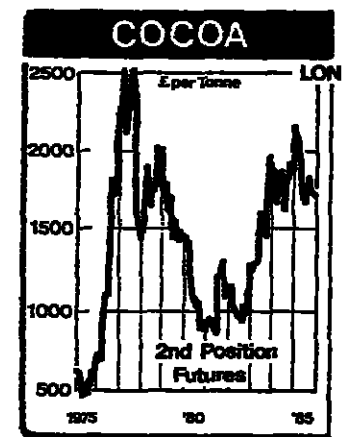
Zaire is perhaps the clearest example in Africa of a country which has suffered the painful contradictions of debt and living standards, sought by the Fund — but has reaped only a fraction of the promised benefits.

According to a recent IMF study of adjustment programmes in Africa, prepared by a former director of the Fund's African department, Justin Zulu: "Restoring financial stability can generate confidence that will encourage foreign investors and lead to private sector capital inflows. As recent experience shows, the West, and particularly foreign creditors and donors

are prepared to provide additional resources to countries undertaking serious adjustment efforts."

Zaire's experience does not bear out Mr Zulu's optimism. Since late 1982, the country has registered impressive successes with its economic reform programme and earned glowing endorsements from the West. Expenditure control and improved revenue collection have restored public finances to their senses, with the budget deficit falling to 3.4 per cent of GDP in 1984 from 10.5 per cent two years earlier. Inflation has been cut to around 20 per cent from over 100 per cent in 1983. The distortions of a thriving currency black market have been virtually wiped out through devaluation and the subsequent floating of the Zaire currency and the Bank of Zaire has scrupulously met repayments on the country's rescheduled external debt (\$4.4bn at the end of last year).

But the rise in private capital and donor inflows which Zaire was led to expect as a reward for three years of impeccable financial behaviour have been tortuously slow to materialise. In 1984, Zaire repaid some

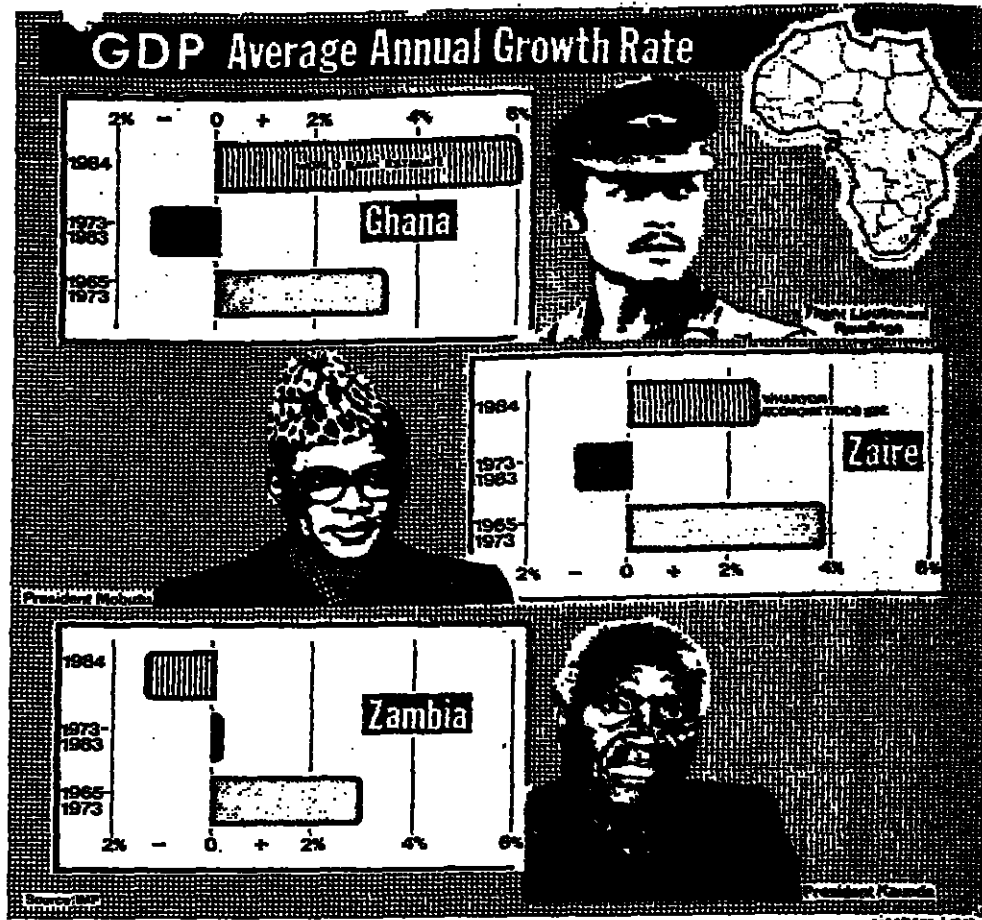


Liaison Motifs

\$191.5m more to medium and long-term creditors than it received in new funds. And despite praise for its programme from Western bilateral donors, new aid disbursements from these sources have lagged well behind Zaire's repayments to them of principal and interest.

The Government of President Mobutu Sese Seko can scarcely escape all the blame for this outcome, say donor officials in Kinshasa. But there can be little doubt that unless there is a major increase soon in multi- and bi-lateral aid and new foreign investment, Zaire's will stick to its reforming policies will be weakened.

Government officials question whether, despite all the hard-



ships (Kinshasa markets sell onions cut into quarters to match the purchasing power of shantytown dwellers), the basis has yet been laid for long-term growth.

In the case of Zaire's southern neighbour, Zambia, the Fund's short-term horizon is completely dwarfed by the magnitude of the country's economic problems. Comments the World Bank in a remarkably candid passage about Zambia from its 1985 annual report: "In retrospect... it must be admitted that

exports (in the face of a projected sharp decline in production of copper, the main export earner) and attract new foreign investment.

But even the most optimistic analysts say it is difficult to be sanguine about the economy's prospects. They do not expect non-traditional exports to begin to take up the slack from lost copper revenues for several years to come.

Foreign investors will continue to be deterred by Zambia's failure to clear a commercial arrears pipeline estimated at \$700m (including interest due) — and Zambia's \$700m debt to the IMF (excluding interest) is a major burden. Zambia is currently about \$73m in arrears to the Fund.

Of the three, Ghana is most frequently cited by the international institutions, and by Western bilateral donors, as a success story. The World Bank's 1985 annual report singles Ghana out for special praise, calling its economic performance over the past year, when GDP grew by 6 per cent in real terms, "remarkable."

What is not clear is the extent to which the striking improvement in the Ghanaian economy — fit to Jerry Rawlings inherited a nation hurtling towards economic collapse when he took power in a December 1981 military coup — is a result of IMF-backed reforms, and to what extent the credit lies with the return of normal weather after a devastating drought.

Western donors are excited about Ghana. Many see it as the most likely to succeed of all the IMF's test cases in Africa — and they have backed it accordingly (with \$450m in 1985 alone).

Nonetheless, the short- to medium-term remains worrying. Programmes to boost cocoa and gold exports (the main foreign exchange earners) are both at least a year behind schedule, and Ghana faces a serious debt servicing problem which could get out of hand unless exports show more resilience.

According to a government report, debt service due in 1986 amounts to \$423m, or 63 per cent of export earnings as projected in the 1985 budget. And from the end of this year, net flows from the IMF turn negative, making it likely that the country will be forced to continue rolling over agreements with the Fund despite a domestic political atmosphere which is increasingly hostile to its dictates.

These three countries give a flavour of the IMF's record in Africa, a record which is catalogued in Justin Zulu's recent paper on adjustment programmes on the continent. The conclusions of the paper must give both African and Western policy-makers pause: the period studied (1980-81), only one-fifth of countries reached the programme's target on economic growth. Half reached their inflation target and only a third attained targets relative to the current account of the balance of payments.

Nonetheless, most African watchers agree that governments on the Continent are, on the whole, showing a new commitment to reform. But they expect greater donor backing if they are to survive the political risks involved: the risk of postponing, seemingly indefinitely, desperately-needed investments in social infrastructure, the risk of constraining demand to the point where only a quarter of an onion is affordable; the risk of sudden retrenchment in countries with no system of social security. They are risks of which African officials contend, the IMF shows little sign of being aware.

The West would do well to look again at the conclusion of the World Bank's third report on sub-Saharan Africa, published a year ago: "A growing number of African countries are at a turning point in their willingness to implement major policy reforms," warns the Bank.

"Unless external financial support is forthcoming, they may go no further."

## What's the score?

He has attended all the important Whitehall meetings over public spending this autumn. He says nothing. He offers no advice. And, apart from the occasional yawn, grin, or gasp of horror, he takes no noticeable part in the proceedings. He is The Scorekeeper.

This year the Treasury has chosen an assistant secretary, Richard Gray, for this silent service.

As the spending ministers and the Treasury ministers indulge in horse-trading and bargaining his job is to note down the series of claims, counter-claims, offers and withdrawals, in the labyrinth of negotiations. At the end of each day he reports back to Great George Street so that the Treasury always knows where it has won, lost or drawn.

Gray could probably fill a book by now on ministerial tricks, trials and tribulations. But true to the form, he has observed his vows of silence monastically.

Once the final details of the 1986-87 public expenditure have been agreed by tomorrow's Cabinet meeting he will leave the political battlefield and return to the anonymity of one of the world's most secretive treasury buildings.

## On the ball

As keen snooker players, Terry Foster and Glyn Ineson were sometimes put out when they arrived at their club in Harey, Yorkshire, to find that the previous players had not put the protective dust-sheet over the table.

When the two friends since school days were paid off from their jobs a year ago they started making a spring-loaded table cover.

Their enterprise brought them a £2,000 cheque yesterday and the first Wira Technology Group "Initiative Award," founded by the Leeds-based research group for bright ideas in the woolen industry.

The prize on a snooker table costs up to £500. Ineson says

## Men and Matters

that their Baignard cover will lengthen the life of a table by at least a quarter. "At £130 the cover will pay for itself in a year."

## Defensive gesture

An offshore millstone that has hung round the British taxpayer's neck for more than a century will be removed if a plan announced by Guernsey to take over the upkeep of the half-mile long Alderney breakwater goes ahead.

Guernsey specifically excluded the breakwater when it took over responsibility for Alderney's finances after World War Two. Now, faced with a request to contribute to Britain's defence bill, the island sees a way of killing two birds with one stone — fulfilling its patriotic duty while ending a potential source of friction with Whitehall.

Work on the breakwater started in the 1840s as part of an abortive Admiralty scheme to create a huge naval harbour in Alderney to counter the base built by the French at Cherbourg.

By 1964, well over £1m had been spent on the great work, in deep and stormy waters. Since then it has been damaged by Channel gales almost every winter.

The Department of the Environment now employs a team endlessly repairing the white elephant at a cost of some £500,000 a year. The Channel Islanders have always taken the robust view that as the British government put up the breakwater it should pay for it.

## Time-piece

Regular rail travellers may have been surprised to learn in a report from the independent transport watchdog com-

mittee, that a mere 51 per cent of Inter City trains are late.

My man on the Paddington platform thinks he has discovered how British Rail manages it.

Trains which are running behind time are now "re-timed" — so that when the measuring comes to be done, the original train no longer exists and therefore cannot be late. Simple when you know how.

## Charity accounts

With more than £900m a year now being given to charities in Britain, the standard of their reports and accounts has become a matter of some importance.

The Accounting Standards Committee is due to publish its draft guidelines next week — but for the past three years the Charities Aid Foundation and the Voluntary Movement Group have been encouraging improvements by sponsoring awards for the best annual reports.

This year's top prize of £1,000 was presented yesterday to the British Heart Foundation which, with an income of around £12m last year, funds some two dozen research units in universities and hospitals.

Its report, produced by Claire Marley and Burnett Associates, strikingly illustrates the Foundation's work with the case histories of heart disease victims, pictured on the cover as "Five Who Survived — Living Proof that Research Saves Lives."

The £1,000 will go to St George's Hospital, London, to help pay for a study into why some people have heart attacks without previous warning.

A special award for smaller charities went to Centre Thirty-Three, a youth counselling service in Cambridge run by some 30 people on an income of

£19,000 a year. Their home-produced report and accounts even includes several poems about their work.

## Two sides

There are two contrasting references to Martin Abramson, chairman of Ronald Martin, the office equipment and stationery group, in the papers associated with the company's proposed USM flotation.

A pen portrait, in a leaflet about the activities of a subsidiary, RMS International, says Abramson "is known throughout Europe, America and the Far East for his business integrity and has an unimpeachable record of straight dealing."

On page 35 of the placing document, it states that "in March, 1982, the Crown prosecuted the chairman of the company who pleaded guilty to a charge of forgery and deception and received concurrent suspended sentences of one month and three months respectively."

The charges related to the practice of obtaining typewriters from distributors at discounts wider than those normally available by ordering them in the names of certain big customers. Abramson says that his company was doing quite openly just what many others in the business were doing; that it stopped the practice before the court case; and that it refunded the £3,705 it had obtained in certain discounts.

Quit, so. But "unimpeachable record?"

## Face value

A bit of shrewd salesmanship was noted in a London street market yesterday. Beneath a sign proclaiming "Look young — Feel young," were jars of rejuvenating cream.

"Will it really do that for me?" asked an elderly woman. The stallholder turned to a young girl at his side and said: "Give the lady a large jar, mother."

Observer



## SOME PEOPLE WILL NEVER HEAR OF ASTON TECHNOLOGY

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FOR THE LAST WORD IN FUTURE



**RICHARD DUNN**, 41-year-old managing director of Thames Television, sums up the recent history of the largest ITV company with feeling: "It's been one hell of a year. I'll be glad when it's Christmas."

Behind his desk a cartoon shows an upside down television picture on a domestic set—a trophy from the strike-breaking management service put out by the company a year ago.

The strike, during which management demonstrated clearly that it could get the picture the right way up without the technical unions, ushered in a year of headlines and crises.

Within 12 months, apart from the confrontation with the unions, there has been:

- The Dallas affair—the "poaching" of the oil industry drama from the BBC. The unilateral acquisition was "a case of almost reckless misjudgment," according to Mr Hugh Dundas, the Thames chairman, and one which he believes has caused deep division in what has been a united and happy company.

- Thames declared a loss of £4.8m on its UK television operations in the year to March and was dependent on a £13.5m contribution from overseas sales for its £8.7m profit on a turnover of £167.9m.

- The company lost not only its managing director Bryan Cowell, who resigned over the Dallas affair, but also a finance and sales director.

- Central and Television South continued to eat into Thames' share of national advertising revenue which showed an unexpectedly sharp decline and has been reversed only in the last three months.

- To cap it all came last month's bid from Carlton Communications, a television facilities and advertising production house with a dramatic growth rate. Before the bid many Thames executives had hardly heard of it.

Thames' owners, BET and Thorn EMI, soon made it clear they wanted to accept Carlton's £25.5m bid—if the IBA would let them.

The series of crises have led some to believe that the flagging of British television has been helped below the waterline and will slowly sink in the next Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) franchise round in 1989.

When Mr Dunn, who was director of production at Thames until he was asked to run the company in July after the unexpected Cowell resignation, is optimistic about the future.

"I think we are in very good shape to win the franchise," says Mr Dunn, who was a heavy middleweight Cambridge boxer, and also founded his college drama society.

## Thames Television

# A screen test for thwarted sellers

By Raymond Snoddy



Richard Dunn: "hell of a year"

For that forecast to stand a chance of becoming reality the question of ownership is the most serious and immediate problem to be sorted out now that Thames and BET have revealed themselves as willing sellers.

"The pressure is on for a fairly considerable reconstruction which I hope will end up with Thames retaining its sovereignty, having a broader shareholding structure and all its parts intact," says Mr Dunn.

Indeed, the IBA made it clear at the time of the last franchise round that it wanted the share ownership of Thames—BET and Thorn EMI share equally all the voting shares through their subsidiaries AR Television and Thames Television Holdings—to be broadened.

Plans for a flotation of about 20 per cent of its shares were being prepared when Mr Michael Green, the 38-year-old chairman of Carlton, identified Thames as both the most attractive and vulnerable vehicle to carry him into mainstream television.

On September 6 Mr Green first offered close to £55m for Thames. When this was summarily rejected as too low, Carlton, a company capitalised at more than £200m, increased the offer to a point at which it could not be refused—£85.5m.

Both Thorn EMI and BET have decided for different reasons to move away from the entertainment sector.

Carlton planned its attempt to buy an ITV company over many months. It was three months ago when Mr Green startled Mr David Glenister, the IBA's director of television, by suddenly asking over lunch: "How do I buy an ITV company?" To which the answer was "You don't."

Despite this, Mr Green subsequently had talks at the IBA with both Mr John Whitney, the Authority's director-general and Lord Thomson, the IBA chairman.

All sides in the affair believe that either Mr Whitney or Lord Thomson, or both, led buyer and sellers to think a deal was possible.

On Friday October 11, just before news of the bid became public Mr Whitney, telephoned Thames shareholders and Mr Green leaving the impression

that he was now bullish about the prospect of the bid going ahead.

The IBA unexpectedly cut short discussions on October 10 when it said the Carlton bid was unacceptable on the grounds that it would lead to a major change in the nature and characteristics of a viable ITV company.

Apart from pre-empting further discussion the brief statement issued at the next Authority meeting on October 15 appeared to create a precedent that the ownership of a viable ITV company cannot change hands in mid-franchise and that BET and Thorn EMI a lot of money.

"We'll never get anything like as good an offer again," a Thorn executive says plainly.

The main IBA concern, it is believed, was the fear that a successful Carlton bid would

create an auction in the shares of other ITV companies.

Most options on the future ownership structure of Thames are still open.

But one possibility being considered envisages a two or even three-stage disposal.

In this plan Thorn, which is more eager to move now, would get rid of all its stake as soon as possible, perhaps in a private placing to three or four "blue chip" British companies. BET would hold on until the television company's financial prospects improve and then take part of its money from a 20-30 per cent flotation next year.

BET might keep a small "anchor" stake to see Thames through the next franchise period before finally bowing out of commercial television after nearly 30 years involvement.

But what sort of a company will the new potential entrants to commercial television be buying? How could the largest ITV company lose nearly £5m on its UK franchise?

"It's been a licence to print money. The trouble is they've given it all away to the staff," a senior executive from a rival company says.

In fact the process of change at Thames is already well under way. After record £13.5m profits in the year to March 1984 Thames board backed a proposal by Mr Dunn to "restructure" the company among the working practices that are costing us so dear "even at the risk of turning the screens blank."

The two strikes that resulted cost £5m, but Mr Dunn believes, created a new climate of industrial relations at Thames.

"I was very worried after the strike that the climate would be spoiled for ever. Absolutely the reverse. The whole management earned a new respect," he says.

The salaries of video tape editors have fallen as a result of the strike from about £28,000 to £20,000 a year and Mr Dunn managed to end payments for overtime that wasn't actually worked. Agreements were also reached on rostering the number of transmission staff needed for a particular shift rather than having a fixed crew of 30 on duty even when Thames was only relaying another ITV company's signal.

The changes have saved more than £500,000 this year, talks on reducing the size of camera crews are continuing as part of a continuing campaign to cut costs.

Over the next three years these cuts could lead to between 200 and 300 jobs going at Thames through natural wastage or early retirement.

Work is well advanced on drawing up a five year plan for the company to 1990. Thames has also reconstructed its advertising department after hiring Jonathan Shier to run it from Scottish Television.

The company's advertising share last month rose to 15.5 per cent after recently hovering around 14 per cent.

As advertising revenue turns up Mr Dunn believes there is a good chance that Thames will have a record year with some executives believing net profit of £15m is possible. Even the final resting place of Dallas will have almost certainly been decided by Christmas.

After a train of disasters Thames has some good news to report. The US television association which awards the international Emmy's has chosen Thames to present a gala evening of its programmes in New York in 1987—the first British television organisation to be chosen.

In addition to prestige, the "Salute to Thames" will be an extremely attractive shop window for further programmes sales to the US.

The IBA's mid-term review due to be published in December of ITV contractors will almost certainly give Thames an "excellent" rating for its programme output which ranges from Minder to TV Eye.

Once when boxing for Cambridge, Richard Dunn had to tackle "quite ferocious looking" Royal Marine who was also an ABA champion, but he went the distance.

The 6 foot 4 inch managing director is clearly determined to do the same at Thames and take the company into what he believes is the growth area of commercial satellite television in Europe.

## Britain's overseas trade

# Why services will not fill the gap

By Lord Aldington

ON OCTOBER 16 Christian Tyler gave a concise summary of the Report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Overseas Trade. The next day Samuel Brittan gave the report an unintended boost with some scornful comments directed at my colleagues and myself. Quite amusing, and no offence taken. It is not the messengers that matter, but the message.

Unpleasant, if we are to avoid a crisis in Britain's affairs in the foreseeable future, the national attitude towards trade and manufacturing needs to change radically. That is not a message of inevitable doom. We have confidence in Britain's ability to manufacture, given the right conditions.

The argument against us is that there will be no crisis. We can go on as we are. Certainly the reduction of inflation is most welcome, as is the record volume of exports and the improvement in productivity. But these have to be seen in world perspective. Imports of manufactured goods reflect industrial competitiveness just as much as exports do, and are much greater than those exports.

There is as a result a deficit in the manufactured goods account of nearly £4bn instead of a surplus of £5bn in 1980. Think of how many extra there would be in employment if we produced and sold £5bn more goods. Though manufacturing output is substantially higher than in 1981, it is still much lower than in 1974. Other major competitor countries, by contrast, record higher manufacturing output since those years.

And despite recent improvements the gap between our productivity and that of our competitors is larger than it was 10 years ago. Our recent economic growth is also most welcome, as is the surplus in our total balance of trade, but North Sea oil has contributed greatly to both, and in doing so has masked the underlying problems that have plagued the British economy for decades.

We agree that manufacturing, services and agriculture are interdependent in the economy. That is not a good reason for allowing manufacturing to decline in output and competitiveness. We are of course aware that in developed economies services form a growing part of GDP, but the fact is that alone among its competitor countries Britain's manufacturing output has fallen in absolute terms since 1974.

That the demand is there for manufactured goods is proven by the figures of imports into the UK market, as by the flourishing trade in manufactured goods in the world. It is addled to say we have not studied the market mechanism. We have observed that the markets of today are not the same as ideal theoretical markets; governments inter-

important difference between us and Samuel Brittan lies in his belief, which he shares with the Treasury, that as the oil trade surplus runs off the rest of the trade balance will automatically improve again. We examined both the forecasts of the decline in North Sea oil output and the automaticity argument. We thought it prudent to base plans on 1980 as the date when Britain's oil account is no longer in surplus. It was wrong to write that we had ignored a Government memorandum giving a later date. Our conclusions on automaticity are summarised on page 82. Services cannot substitute for manufacturing. The decline of manufacturing output was not an inevitable consequence of North Sea oil. New industries and new products require a long time-scale. Last capacity will take time to re-tool. Lost markets at home and abroad will take time to regain. Recovery from the present base is not just a matter of improvement. You cannot improve what has gone.

## The dynamic process of growth and production

even the British Government; credit terms are often vital, and so on. It is in those kinds of market that our manufacturers must compete.

Both the Chancellor and Mr Tebbit firmly stated that they were not unilateral disarmers in this or any other field. We asked for more support from the Government to match and sometimes to outdo our competitors. Britain is behind and has to catch up.

Quite rightly the British Government has given over £400m to support innovation and more than £1bn to industry in other ways. So Whitehall talk that this kind of support cocoons industry with subsidies is odd. Likewise, with help for export promotion, where the extra expenditure recommended is minimal. Since growth and production are a dynamic process, the more our exports are stimulated the more this feeds into domestic growth. If all that is "corporatism," I am not ashamed of it. Governments by their decisions can be a driving force. Look around you. But perhaps the most

The exchange rate is affected by many other factors than the oil balance. And the interest rate is also not unimportant. The ups and downs in the oil account do not by themselves tackle the long-term factors which over many decades have damaged the competitiveness of manufacturing in Britain. Long-term factors identified by the Committee led to its call for a change in national attitudes to give manufacturing a higher place in society, in education, in careers, and in financial and industrial policies. Recent events have made that change all the more urgent. The longer we delay, the steeper the climb. Ours is not a doom and gloom report. We believe a change in national attitudes our manufacturers can capture more markets at home and abroad, and can create a larger industrial base. Of course, in the long run, even without the changes steps can be taken to balance the trade account. But at what level of GDP and standard of living? High, because the nation has woken up to the importance of manufacture or low, because it has not?

The author was chairman of the Lords Select Committee on Overseas Trade.

## International Tin Council

From Mr P Farthing

Sir—Dr Herman's article (November 5) on the role of the International Tin Council in the present crisis is, as usual, topical and stimulating.

If I may, however, I should like to dispell the impression given by his final paragraphs that creditors of the ITC will be unable to resort to the council's property for the purpose of obtaining satisfaction of arbitration awards which may well be made in their favour.

Dr Herman refers to Article 8 of the headquarters agreement between the British Government and the council, drawing attention to the fact that the agreement provides that the property and assets of the council shall be immune from judicial constraint. From this he concludes that the assets of the council may not be taken in enforcement of arbitration awards.

In this, I think, he may be mistaken, because he does not appear to have taken into account the International Tin Council (Immunities and Privileges) Order 1972 made pursuant to powers granted by the International Organisations Act 1968.

This order incorporates into our domestic law some of the provisions of the headquarters agreement, including the conferring of corporate personality upon the council and the granting of a degree of immunity from suit. Under the Order of 1972 the council has a general immunity from suit except for the purpose of enforcing arbitration awards.

But I do not believe that the value of this provision is reduced in the way in which Dr Herman suggests. The provision of Article 8 of the headquarters agreement rendering the property and assets of the council immune from judicial constraint does not appear in the Immunity Order of 1972, and therefore, in my opinion, is not part of our domestic law.

I therefore believe that all the free and available assets of the council will be available to its creditors to enforce any arbitration award which they may obtain.

Nevertheless, one must hope that the meeting of the council will lead to a resolution of the present crisis, and the payment in full of the council's creditors. No doubt the meeting will also wish to consider whether, or how, the council is to operate in the future. I would suggest that it is time from suit anomalous immunity from a body which is no more nor less than a market trader, and which should be bound by the same legal obligations as any other person who makes a con-

## Letters to the Editor

tract in a commodity market. If the sovereign states which are members of the council sought to support the price of tin by buying it in London in their own names, they would not be immune from suit in our courts on the contracts which they made. Just because they choose to achieve the same objective through the medium of the council, there is no reason why they should not be subject to the same legal jurisdiction as if they had traded personally.

Peter J. Farthing, Clyde and Co, 30 Mitre Lane, EC3.

## Accounting for pit closures

From Dr A. Berry

Sir, Mr Butler of the National Coal Board, following upon the Morpeth et al inquiry, continues to claim (October 31) that the original article in Accountancy contained big misunderstandings, inaccuracies and misconceptions.

In that article, inter alia, it was argued that much of the public debate and justification for pit closures was based upon accounting notions of profit and loss. Witness to this is a programme to reduce NCB capacity to enable it to reach break-even in a couple of years. So not just public debate but also public policy is based upon accounting notions.

The original accountancy article did not claim that the NCB only relied upon the pit statement of profit and loss (the P2) in closure decision. But it did demonstrate the technical accounting problems of that statement and does demonstrate that accounting notions of profit and loss are not wholly relevant to pit closures, not only because of the cost measurement issues but also because of the problem of attaching an appropriate value to the pit revenues.

Robinson of London Business School has shown how an avoidable cost approach would lead to different conclusions on NCB capacity and Glynn of Oxford has shown that a social cost benefit analysis would lead to different conclusions again. Mr Butler, along with the Morpeth group, seems not to want to engage seriously with the problem created by the government requirement for accounting notions of break-even.

The Morpeth group claims to be an independent committee of inquiry, yet its report is published by and indeed is the pro-

perty of the NCB. That group was commissioned as consultants by the NCB. Thus it was not allowed to discuss terms of reference, methods of study or its analysis of research and publications. Indeed, Professor Stamp claimed that "they were too busy to go into libraries and dig these things out." Hence it seems to have relied upon what it could glean from the NCB, which I am sure would have given it the same courteous assistance which was afforded to me and my colleagues.

Although any inquiry by the Morpeth group would certainly be helpful to the development of accounting practices in the NCB it is a pity that this group's focus upon a narrow misunderstanding of the original accountancy article does limit its contribution to public debate.

(Dr) Anthony J. Berry, Manchester Business School, Booth Street West, Manchester.

## IoD and Serps

From Mr M. Ballist

Sir—You report (October 31) that Sir John Hoskins, director-general of the Institute of Directors, states that continuing Serps implies first a reduced scope for personal pensions and second that the population cannot be entrusted to save to top up their retirement income.

There is already ample scope for topping-up retirement income in a tax efficient manner and this argument just does not stand up to examination.

A much more serious consequence of abolishing Serps would be the loss of entitlement to retirement income as a consequence of periods of unemployment. At present, the state earnings related pension is calculated on the best 20 years' revalued earnings. Thus, periods of unemployment are unlikely to reduce to any great extent the retirement benefit. A similar protection is included in the basic state pension as a "contribution credit" is given during unemployment.

Sir John cannot assume that everyone will find continuous employment up to pension age or that the income from employment will always allow retirement savings to be made. No occupational scheme can provide benefits during periods of unemployment and with the necessity for increased job

mobility in the private sector, care needs to be taken not to abolish a retirement system just at the time when many of its advantages will be needed.

M. T. Ballist, 25 Hiltgate Street, W8.

## Firing the chief executive

From Mr P. O'Shea

Sir—In the conclusion of the Lee column on October 31 we read that "Many of Britain's... companies operate with a chairman/chief executive officer but there are strong arguments for retaining a division between the two. The chairman's job is to set other things, to fire an inadequate chief executive."

There may be a case for a division between the two but not because it is the chairman's job to fire a chief executive. The chairman is appointed by a resolution of the board of directors and only that board can fire one or both of them. By definition there is no one above the chief executive officer in the chain of command except the directors as a board. The chairman's job is to chair meetings and really nothing else unless the articles and/or the board say otherwise.

P. J. Pace, O'Shea, 13 Westchester Drive, NW4.

## Exports of weapons

From Mr M. Peacock

Sir—Having just read Bridget Bloom's article on "How GEC was put on the spot" (October 23) I saw no reference in it to the possible export opportunities of any of weapon systems discussed. As a civil servant on secondment from industry in the early 1980s who was once very much involved with Marconi's two torpedo programmes, Stingray and Spearfish, the case for a home-grown industry rested largely on the longer term ability to exploit the advanced technology in overseas markets. If such a situation is still relevant then maybe even the £5bn cost quoted by Mr Peter Levene is not quite so horrendous as it sounds. In only rare instances have British weapons systems been developed with non-UK customers in mind and it is to GEC's credit that back in the mid to late 1970s it recognised this fault in the MoD's thinking process. Without these being export possibilities I don't believe GEC or any other company can undertake any major weapon development and earn a reasonable return except, of course, at the taxpayers' expense.

M. H. Peacock, 1, Legat Street, Johannesburg, Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa.

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Chris Sherwell reports on disarray in Manila after the call for a snap presidential poll

## Marcos makes himself an election issue

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos' declaration this week that he wants a snap presidential election in the Philippines has thrown an already confused domestic political scene into disarray.

Mr Marcos said he intended to ask parliament to call a poll for January 17. An election, he said, would "erase doubts" about his government's popularity. "We need a snap election to convince the world that our programme is supported by the people."

His proposal must still be confirmed by the ruling New Society movement, perhaps this weekend. In August, the party discarded the idea of a November poll after successfully crushing an opposition impeachment bill.

This time, US pressure on Mr Marcos to renew his mandate appears to have prompted the election plan, although Washington has constantly denied pushing him in that direction. Diplomats are also treating this week's proposal more seriously, if only because Mr Marcos, who is 68 and has held power for 20 years, uncharacteristically ventured out of the presidential palace to launch his campaign on Monday.

Mr Marcos' current six-year term is not due to expire until 1987 and most people feel he would not go ahead with an election without

UNIDO, the Philippines' largest opposition party, said yesterday it would seek court action to prevent President Ferdinand Marcos from calling presidential elections in January, Our Foreign Staff writes.

It said such an election would be unconstitutional, since "no snap election can take place unless the president becomes

permanently incapacitated, dies, resigns or is removed from office."

However, it became clear yesterday that Mr Marcos himself might be unclear over his election tactics. He said Parliament would be asked to decide whether an election would be held and that the vacant post of vice-president would also be contested.

being sure of winning it. He has all the advantages of an incumbent, with easy access to the local media and greater resources than his opponents. For two years, the fractious opposition has failed to agree on a single candidate who could successfully challenge him.

Analysts agree, however, that if opposition differences were put aside in support of Mrs Cory Aquino, the stage would be set for a dramatic electoral showdown. Mrs Aquino is the widow of Mr Benigno Aquino, the opposition leader whose assassination in August 1983 contributed crucially to the present crisis in the Philippines. Diplomats see her as a credible candidate, despite her inexperience. Victory, they say, would be little short of poetic.

Nevertheless, an election will solve little if it is called on Mr Mar-

cos's terms. Questions have already arisen about the legitimacy of his latest move, since technically he should resign office first, something he has plainly ruled out.

The dilemma for the opposition is acute. If Mr Marcos is contriving a set of circumstances not envisaged by the constitution, which provides for presidential and vice-presidential elections in the event of his death, incapacity or resignation, a positive response from the opposition to his political challenge is likely to render any legal problem irrelevant.

However, to boycott an election would leave the way open for Mr Marcos to fight alone or simply call the whole affair off, telling Washington that at least he tried. Either way, the opposition is embarrassed and the scope for US pressure is likely to be reduced.

It remains a delicate question whether an election, if it went ahead, would actually placate US opinion. Initially, that would depend on whether the poll is free and fair. The last general election in May 1984 was freer and fairer than most in the Philippines, but hardly a model of virtue. The US, for its part, has already indicated that it will only observe and not supervise a presidential poll.

The biggest questions for everbody, however, are whether an early election is likely to counter the intensifying guerrilla insurgency throughout the country or put the persistently wayward economy back on the rails. Diplomats and bankers suggest the answers at present are both negative, although Mr Marcos has already advertised the proposed election as a key to solving the two problems.

The Communist-inspired New People's Army, its strength now put above 12,000 armed men, can be expected to use an election campaign as a chance to illustrate its strength in rural and urban areas.

His recent military successes have demonstrated its growing influence and added to the rising anxiety in Washington, which sees a threat to the strategically important air and naval bases in the Philippines and does not want "another Iran."

On the economic front, the failure

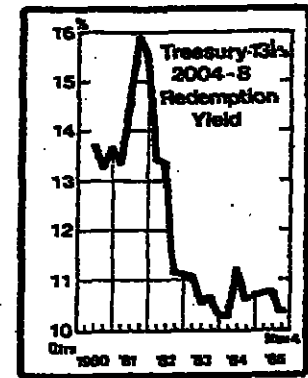
of Mr Marcos fully to implement an IMF-inspired reform programme has endangered the inflow of fresh foreign exchange under a loan and rescheduling package for its \$25.5m external debt. Only last month, the US supported the withholding of an instalment on the SDR 615m (\$658m) IMF standby credit, and that in turn will affect disbursement of a \$225m commercial loan from the Philippines' creditor banks.

At issue is Mr Marcos' apparent refusal to make real reforms in the coconut and sugar industries - both dominated by his associates - and the Government's budget deficit, which has exceeded its limits because of falling revenues and higher expenditures. A presidential election campaign can be expected to swell that deficit still further, delaying even longer a return to economic order.

If that means continued negative growth, further unemployment and hardship and greater popular dissatisfaction, those are prospects for the future. For Mr Marcos, the immediate issue is power and how to retain it. He has successfully wrong-footed his opponents countless times before, and is sustained by a belief in his own leadership. To some, his latest actions suggest that the central issue now is whether he will ever leave office peacefully.

## THE LEX COLUMN

## Next best is good enough



The stores sector must be discounting everything short of miracles from its high flyers, for how else can one explain the sour response in yesterday's market to the splendid figures from J. Sainsbury?

The sector as a whole has lost some of its appeal as a home for bank money, having climbed back up to its high level relative to the market on the basis of last week's results from Marks and Spencer. But J. Sainsbury only had to produce pre-tax profits growing more than twice as fast as Marks - to £20m for the year to August - to see its share price fall 9p to 22p.

What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. The expansion of Next, which has underpinned the 50 per cent compound growth at J. Sainsbury in the past four years, has been largely at the expense of Marks - now evidently coming to grips with women's fashion.

The great achievement of the Next idea was to breathe life into the dead bones of the old Hepworth chain; but now that these stores are down to a mere 19 per cent of the total square footage, this avenue of cheap expansion is all but blocked. This is reflected as much in the change of corporate name to Next as in the 14-fold increase in last year's interest charge. Equally, expansion into new and risky fields, such as lingerie or hairdressing, will no longer be overwhelmingly financed out of the slew of property disposals that left some £2m in profit below the line even after the launch costs of Next Interiors.

And in the world of middling-to-high fashion, a pre-interest margin of more than last year's 14 per cent will be hard to achieve except through a last spasm of liquidation at Hepworth. Competition from Burton and Co will see to that.

Growth at the pre-tax level of 30 per cent or more should be well in hand for the current year; but, beyond that, things do not look so clear.

### Property debentures

For the asset-rich end of the property sector, at least, the corporate debt market has now well and truly reopened. In the past few months there have been six issues, taking in almost £400m of long-term money at improving terms. Yesterday's 40-year debenture from Land Securities provides a benchmark for the market since the issue has been priced only 40 basis points

above the reference gilt shown in our chart; a year ago, the difference would have been at least a full point.

It would be hard, of course, to find a better credit than Land, whose total borrowings before the issue were only equal to 10 per cent of net assets. The quality of those assets and the security of the income they generate explain why Land was able to borrow a few points more cheaply than the World Bank, and a full quarter point below yields at which other property issues have lately been priced. Demand for well-secured ultra-long sterling debt is evidently in good shape.

Except in the unlikely circumstance of a prolonged deflation, it also makes eminently good sense for the property companies to be picking up their money in this way, even at double-figure yields. At present discounts, equity issues are deservedly unpopular, while the cost of servicing a dividend on equivalent amounts of equity would probably outstrip that of the bond within the decade.

In any case, Land's balance sheet remains unimpaired even by the standards of its now-conservative sector. Having got its feet wet, and tested the market's appetite, Land would probably win friends for its ordinary shares by increasing the size of the issue before too long.

### J. Sainsbury

Profits growth at J. Sainsbury is no longer a simple matter of selling more food at higher margins in bigger stores. The food retailers are still doing an admirable job but, to satisfy the stock market, they now need a little help from accountants and associates.

Yesterday's results for the 28 weeks to October 5 were just ahead of most forecasts at £2.4m pre-tax

and the share price duly responded with a 6p rise to 36p. But over one third of the 23.2 per cent increase in reported profits arose from the effect of higher capitalised interest (25m against 14m) and an exceptional burst in the associate contribution.

Not that there is much to muller with the underlying trading performance. Gross margins are healthy, supermarket volume growth was over 9 per cent in the six months and productivity was around 8 per cent higher despite the substantial gap between food price and wage cost inflation.

Sainsbury's housekeeping has always been strong enough to support a premium rating in the sector and a p/e in the low twenties - assuming full-year profits of £18m - looks no more exorbitant now than it has ever done. But, with a revitalised Tesco trading on a multiple of only 15, Sainsbury cannot let the grass grow under its feet. Extended opening hours should help the food retailers next year but, with cash still running out of the business, Sainsbury will be relying on the accountants and associates for a while yet.

### National Savings

Yesterday's money-supply figures for banking October were presented on the new Mansion House basis and provided an excellent excuse for the Government Broker to take the rest of the year off.

When external and foreign currency finance of the public sector is counted towards PSBR funding, it is now, the Treasury comes out well ahead of the game. It appears already to have funded 0.55p of the PSBR outstanding for the rest of the year.

So, on the Government's numbers, there is only about £14bn to go and a portion of that should come from National Savings, which, as of Monday, will be offering a glamorous new instrument. The indexed-income bond is an index-linked bond with a new twist. The income is linked to the RPI and the capital is unprotected.

Stockbroking computers were working flat out yesterday to find merits in the new instrument but sadly it looks rather unattractive to anyone who pays income tax. Even for a basic-rate taxpayer the annual net return looks roughly a percentage point below a comparable index-linked. Perhaps the Government Broker should stay in his office after all.



Sig Bettino Craxi

## Communists unlikely to help Craxi

By James Buxton in Rome

THE ITALIAN Communist party appeared yesterday to reject the appeal by Mr Bettino Craxi, the Socialist Prime Minister, to co-operate with the Government in obtaining swift parliamentary approval of the 1986 budget.

Mr Alessandro Natta, the Communist party leader, told Parliament his party considered the budget to be part of a whole economic strategy that was against the interests of the working class. He also said the five-party coalition Government, which has been reconstituted after President Francesco Cossiga rejected Mr Craxi's resignation last week, was in itself divided over the budget.

Mr Natta's statement to parliament did not specifically rule out all co-operation, but made it sound as if any large concession to the Government would be extremely unlikely.

Mr Craxi made his request for Communist party assistance in his speech to Parliament on Monday, opening the debate that will lead to a vote of confidence in his Government. The vote will probably be held tonight.

The Government is afraid that after the time lost both during the Achille Lauro hijacking and in the political crisis that followed it there is a serious danger that it will not get the budget approved by the deadline of December 31.

That would mean the Government would have to be financed in the early months next year on a very inflexible, provisional basis. Mr Craxi evidently hoped he could expect some help on that domestic issue from the leading opposition party, which made a volte face during the Achille Lauro affair and supported him for his tough line with the US Government over the American role in the crisis.

In practice, much government legislation in Italy is assisted in its passage through Parliament by the tacit help of the Communist party.

## IBM to cut computer output at UK European supply base

By Jason Crisp

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS Machines, the US computer giant, plans a temporary reduction in production of personal computers at its Greenock plant in Scotland, which supplies all Europe.

The move appears to follow a build-up of stocks and has meant that orders from sub-contractors such as Thorn EMI and AB Electronics have had to be rescheduled. However, IBM said it was a result of the seasonal nature of personal computer sales, which are weakest in the first quarter of the year.

One analyst thought the cut in production was a result of over-optimistic forecasting by IBM. Demand for personal computers in the European market is currently much stronger than the US where growth has slowed dramatically.

IBM typically has about a 35 per cent share of the market in Euro-

pean countries, which is significantly lower than in the US. According to Ms Jan Lewis of the Palo Alto Research Group, IBM has a 66 per cent share of sales to large and medium-sized corporations and 30 per cent to small businesses.

News of IBM's rescheduling of orders coincides with an analysts' meeting at Greenock today which is being attended by senior IBM management from the US, including Mr John Akers, president and chief executive officer. This week, IBM cut the price of several of its PCs by an average of 15 per cent throughout Europe.

IBM said the rescheduling of orders affected the early part of 1986 and was a short-term temporary measure, but would not say how long it was expected to last. The company expected sales of PCs in the first quarter of 1986 to exceed

those in the same period this year. It also stated that production for the whole of 1986 would not be materially affected, which would indicate it is a stock problem.

IBM said: "We are not dissatisfied with our inventory position." It added that reports of very high stocks in the US were "grossly misleading," and there was no question of personal computers being shipped from the US to Europe, nor would there be any redundancies at Greenock.

The change in orders will affect AB Electronics and Thorn EMI. Both companies expected to redeploy staff working on IBM PC products to other areas. IBM is AB Electronics' largest single customer. In addition to supplying IBM with printed-circuit boards for the PC, it also sells components.

## New monetary policies for France

Continued from Page 1

break down barriers and step up competition on France's highly-regulated capital markets.

From next month, companies will be able to tap the money market directly through issuing US-style commercial paper in minimum batches of FF5m (\$630,000) or FF10m. Additionally, short-term Treasury bonds, which traditionally in France have been issued solely to banks and other financial institutions, will be opened up for subscription by all categories of investor.

Banks have criticised Mr Berengery's commercial paper initiative on the grounds that top-class companies will in future have the opportunity of short-circuiting the banking system. However, prime borrowers are already raising funds from French banks at very fine margins because of the general slowdown in corporate lending this year.

Commercial paper issues, which will have maturities of between 10 and 180 days, will have to be backed to a level of 65 per cent of their value by standby credits from the banks. The Finance Ministry hopes to use the commercial paper market to push French companies into improving the quality and frequency of appearance of their financial accounts.

## UK corporate credit demand up sharply

By Alexander Nicoll in London

LENDING by banks to British companies and individuals accelerated sharply in October, suggesting the authorities will maintain a cautious stance in setting interest rate policy.

The surge in credit demand contributed to continued strong growth of the sterling M3 measure of money supply, comprising cash and bank deposits, for which the Government last month abandoned its annual target range because of structural changes in the economy.

In contrast, the much narrower M0 aggregate, which has assumed a more important role in policy-making, showed a small drop in the banking month ending in mid-October, and remained well within its target range.

The authorities appear to have interpreted the figures, taken as a whole, as indicating that monetary policy is sufficiently tight, but as offering little scope for near-term substantial cuts in interest rates.

Mr Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in his Mansion House speech to bankers last month that monetary policy would be determined by the performance of the M0 aggregate and of sterling on the foreign exchange markets. Since then, the pound has been relatively stable on a trade-weighted basis.

Mo, mostly consisting of notes and coins in circulation, fell by an

estimated 4 per cent in the month, to mid-October to register a 14 per cent annualised drop in the past three months. The move took it close to the bottom of its annual target range.

The broad sterling M3 aggregate, still viewed by London markets and the Bank of England as important even though distortions have pushed it far above its former target range, rose 4 per cent in October, putting its annualised growth rate during the past three months at 194 per cent.

There was disappointment in London markets at the £2.1bn rise in bank lending, well above September's low £1.6bn increase and giving an average rise of £1.6bn during the past six months.

Although the monetary authorities could be expected to view with concern a series of lending increases at October's pace, government officials appear to feel the October figures by themselves provide little cause for worry.

The rise in bank lending was offset by a small £200m gain in the public-sector borrowing requirement. Data on government debt sales showed that the government more than funded the public-sector borrowing requirement during the month, making up for previous months when the requirement was underfunded.

See Lex

## UK close to securing Malaysian water deal

By Chris Sherwell in Singapore and Christian Tyler in London

BRITAIN appears to be close to clinching a water distribution contract in Malaysia that would rank as one of the most valuable orders ever won by a UK company in south-east Asia.

Biwater, a private specialist engineering company, is negotiating for a share in a huge five-year project costing up to M\$1.8bn (\$700m).

According to British government officials, Biwater's share of the project could be worth £200m if the negotiations succeed. Other official sources put it as high as £250m to £300m. The company itself would not comment last night.

If the deal goes through, it will be with the help of £60m of UK government aid over four years, itself said to be the largest sum ever allocated for one project from the UK's aid and trade provision. This year's total provision is only £86m.

The Export Credits Guarantee Department, a government agency, is prepared to guarantee repayment of loans of £170m to £180m. A syndicate of banks has been lined up to provide the credit.

Successful completion of the deal would undoubtedly be hailed by British ministers, still smarting over the loss of the Bagmati bridge contract to the Japanese, as evidence of UK competitiveness and a welcome boost for employment.

A letter of intent has already been issued by the Malaysian Government to Biwater and its Malaysian partner, Antah Holdings.

The overall project, made up of 181 separate schemes on the peninsula and islands, will bring pure drinking water to 2m - and eventually 4m - people in even the most remote rural areas. It is part of a planned upgrading of Malaysia's rural infrastructure generally, announced for the period covered by the Fifth Malaysia Plan, 1986-1990.

Speculation has intensified in recent days over whether all of the water contracts will ultimately go to Biwater. Competitors from other countries - France and Japan are mentioned - are believed to be hovering in the wings.

Biwater is a private company with a turnover of £100m a year, based in Dorking, south-west of London. There are 16 companies in the group, six of them outside the UK, specialising in the supply and manufacture of water supply equipment as well as civil engineering.

### Wide differences for summit talks

Continued from Page 1

Mr Yurchenko was not acting under duress. The Soviet authorities had given assurances that Mr Yurchenko would not try to leave the UK covertly before the interview, the State Department said. The Soviet authorities understood that Washington would regard it as a "very serious matter" were he to attempt to do so.

The US, in any case, had taken "legal and security precautions" to ensure that he could not leave without US permission, the State Department said. He did not enjoy diplomatic immunity, it added.

## World Weather

Area	Temp	Wind	Area	Temp	Wind	Area	Temp	Wind	Area	Temp	Wind
Alaska	21	10	Algeria	18	11	Malaga	28	7	Santiago	12	10
Algeria	24	11	Amman	11	12	Manila	32	10	Shanghai	16	11
Amman	27	11	Baghdad	15	12	Mexico	28	10	Singapore	27	12
Baghdad	23	12	Bombay	28	11	Paris	11	12	Tokyo	18	11
Bombay	28	12	Buenos Aires	18	11	Rangoon	28	10	Yokohama	18	11
Buenos Aires	23	12	Cairo	28	11	Seoul	15	12			
Cairo	28	12	Colombo	28	11	Taipei	28	10			
Colombo	28	12	Dhaka	28	11	Tel Aviv	28	10			
Dhaka	28	12	Hankow	28	11	Urumchi	28	10			
Hankow	28	12	Harbin	28	11	Warsaw	15	12			
Harbin	28	12	Hong Kong	28	11	Winnipeg	15	12			
Hong Kong	28	12	Kobe	28	11	Zurich	15	12			
Kobe	28	12	London	15	12						
London	15	12	Los Angeles	28	11						
Los Angeles	28	12	Madrid	28	11						
Madrid	28	12	Moscow	15	12						
Moscow	15	12	New York	15	12						
New York	15	12	Ottawa	15	12						
Ottawa	15	12	Perth	15	12						
Perth	15	12	Rangoon	28	11						
Rangoon	28	12	San Francisco	15	12						
San Francisco	15	12	Sao Paulo	28	11						
Sao Paulo	28	12	Seoul	15	12						
Seoul	15	12	Singapore	27	12						
Singapore	27	12	Taipei	28	10						
Taipei	28	11	Tokyo	18	11						
Tokyo	18	11	Urumchi	28	10						
Urumchi	28	11	Warsaw	15	12						
Warsaw	15	12	Winnipeg	15	12						
Winnipeg	15	12	Zurich	15	12						
Zurich	15	12									

Readings at mid-day yesterday.

C-Clearly B-Broken F-Fair P-Fog S-Snow T-Thunder

## Telecom turns to IBM

Continued from Page 1

the year" and reflected BT's confidence in ICL.

He said it would help to increase the value of ICL's UK mainframe computer orders this year by 35 per cent over last year, when orders totalled more than £200m.

The ICL computer will be used in six of the 24 districts into which BT has recently divided its nationwide operations. The seventh Series 39 will be used for development work.

The contracts were awarded on a single-tender basis after intensive lobbying by ICL to win part of the CSS contracts. BT said it might buy further terminals from ICL but

would not order any more of its mainframe computers for CSS.

BT has so far installed nine IBM computers, the first of them last summer. ICL is due to deliver its first Series 39 machine early next year.

There had been strong pressures in BT to standardise all its computers on IBM and IBM-compatible products. Last year, BT and IBM proposed jointly to launch an electronic information network in the UK, but the plan was vetoed by the British Government.

The CSS programme is intended to replace most of BT's existing computer systems.

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Pitman Central College in London has recently taken delivery of Ferranti micro-computer systems worth £20,000. The PC 800s were ordered for training students on individual and group courses in end-user applications like word processing, spreadsheets and database management.



## FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

## Singapore

The Government is working out measures to aid the economy now that the halcyon days of double digit growth are over. More realistic targets should help to restore confidence in Prime Minister Lee's long-established order

## Economic challenges ahead

By ALAIN CASS, Asia Editor

THE FUTURE was rozier. The present used to be easier. Singapore, mighty city-state, never had to look over its shoulder. Chinese enterprise, determination and the (very) firm hand of Lee Kuan Yew saw to that.

But that was last year, and virtually every year before that, since 1959, when the People's Action Party (PAP) burst on the scene with its solemn, often ruthless, vitality to turn a provincial, oriental town into that peculiarly Asian phenomenon, the "economic miracle". Things are different today. The future looks a darker shade of grey and the present is hard going. Government ministers talk of a deeper than usual recession, rather than an economic crisis. This is probably not an understatement, since inflation is less than 3 per cent, the currency is strong, incomes are high, there is no unemployment and no external threat to the country's integrity.

But, this cannot conceal the uncomfortable fact that, for the first time, Singapore's economy will stagnate this year and may even experience negative growth after years of outperforming much of the rest of the world. The deliberate increase in wages to transform Singapore

from an Asian sweatshop to a high-tech landmark has taken its toll and it looks as if the country is pricing itself out of world markets—at least for the time being.

The downturn has been sudden and savage. The construction sector, which seemed unstoppable not long ago, is slipping into a coma. Tens of thousands of foreign workers have been sent home. Factories are working shorter weeks, the commanding heights of the economy—shipping, oil refining, electronics—are in trouble, and already, more companies have gone to the wall in 1985 than last year. Investment—the lifeblood of the economy—is down 30 per cent on last year.

The key to Singapore's present difficulties lie in the fact that total labour costs increased 10.1 per cent between 1979 and 1984 while productivity rose by only 4.8 per cent during the same period. "There is," as one head of mission puts it, "a widespread realisation that this place has become uneconomic." The optimists say that, as soon as the U.S. economy picks up and Singapore makes the right tactical changes to improve its competitiveness, the economy will revive and the country will be back on its Olympian path.

Others, mostly, it should be said, foreigners, are not so sure. They look at the fact that Singapore is losing the battle to remain competitive to other, why industrialised countries (mcs). They foresee an ageing population, which will peak in the year 2000 and decline thereafter. They watch as the outside world becomes more hostile and feelers on the edge of a trade war as protectionist sentiment in Europe and the U.S. gathers pace. And they wonder, as one observer puts it, whether fundamental changes in the environment in which Singapore operates are not necessary.

These doubts are underlined by the fact that, for the first time, the ruling party no longer seems invulnerable. The 13 per cent swing against the PAP in the December 1984 elections, resulting in the victory of two opposition candidates, was a real shock to the system. Shortly afterwards, Mr Lee was heard to say that, if this is the way Singapore's electorate chose to exercise its democratic prerogative, then he may have to review the system.

Younger and more sensitive heads quickly pointed out that Mr Lee's remarks did not sound a death knell for Singapore in Singapore, but merely expressed the hope that the electorate

would be a bit more discriminating in future. Nevertheless, if the 1984 result represents a trend it poses a major challenge to a party secure in its own well-tested, almost arrogant sense of superiority. All the more so since the combined opposition poll of over 33 per cent of votes cast was not confined to one or two constituencies but reflected as Mr Goh Chok Tong, the first deputy prime minister and Mr Lee's likely successor, conceded a widespread feeling of discontent with the status quo.

## Superiority

The Government admits that one of the major factors which led to the election upset was Singapore's paternalistic—some would say intrusive—style of government.

"Singapore is a society where cleanliness, morality and the disciplines of a mandarin are prized above all other things. There are those who like it that way and they will, no doubt, continue to vote for the PAP. There are many others who do not, and who increasingly resent the Government's excess of zeal in its

concern to create the perfect society. "What we have to do," volunteered Mr Goh, "is listen more carefully to what people are saying, explain our policies more thoroughly and, where necessary, make adjustments."

The election results and the economic downturn present the PAP with a double challenge. The established order is under pressure and, as it is well aware, new responses need to be found.

Faced with this challenge the government could rest on its achievements and hope the ship rights itself in due course. There are, after all, plenty of achievements. Mr Lee's Singapore is nothing if not a success story.

Singapore has trebled its gross national product in the past decade. By 1981 it had overtaken Greece. By 1983 it had overtaken Spain, and last year it began to leave Israel behind.

It has achieved this without, as Singapore's second deputy prime minister Mr S. Rajaratnam, puts it, "turning independence into a scourge." By and large the government has preserved racial harmony in a

multi-racial society. The state has rehoused over 80 per cent of the population from Kongs (villages) or slums into modern flats. It has one of the most successful airlines in the world, businessmen who can compete on equal terms with the best, modern architecture, which is occasionally dazzling and an educational system which, though excessively zealous in ports, produces some of the best minds in Asia. Above all, Singapore works.

But, as Brigadier General Lee Hsien Loong, the prime minister's son and a likely candidate for his job in a few years' time, concedes: "Gratitude is not a basis for legitimacy. Also success raises expectations which, in hard times, no government and economy can possibly meet."

Brigadier Lee and others of his generation seem to recognise that some things must change if what Singapore has achieved so far is to survive and prosper. The question is what, and how deep should that change be?

One change which will come by itself is the departure of the present leadership. Mr Lee senior has indicated he will step down from the premiership when he is 85 which is three years' time. A new generation of leaders, carefully groomed and, in some cases, propelled into high office at breakneck speed is already in place. Some of them seem to concede that the time may have come to loosen up. They sense that the "state-knows-best" attitude—both in the political and the economic sphere—may have outrun its course as an inflexible prescription for government. Whether this heralds changes in substance as opposed to degree remains to be seen. On the political front probably not. The new generation of leaders have inherited their predecessors' zeal for a robust morality, patriotism, incorruptibility and a respect for hierarchy and hard work. Little Singapore sees itself awash in a hostile sea and the prime minister is said to take an increasingly apocalyptic view of the world so this is no time for idle concessions to liberalism. In the economic field, how-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO)



Tougher times face the financial markets and Singaporeans where Prime Minister Lee has to deal with stop signals on growth

## The Economy

The country faces up to the shock of zero growth 2

## Politics

December's election proved a turning point for Prime Minister Lee 3

In father's footsteps: profile of Lee Hsien Loong 3

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Job losses confined to foreign workers 4

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## Biotechnology

Hoping to be the Silicon Valley of the Far East 6



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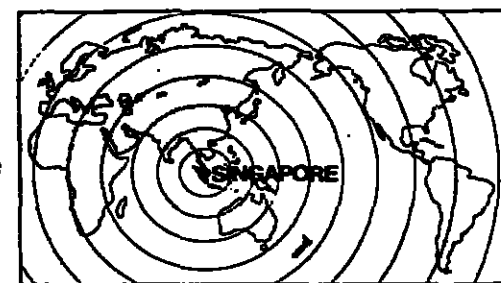
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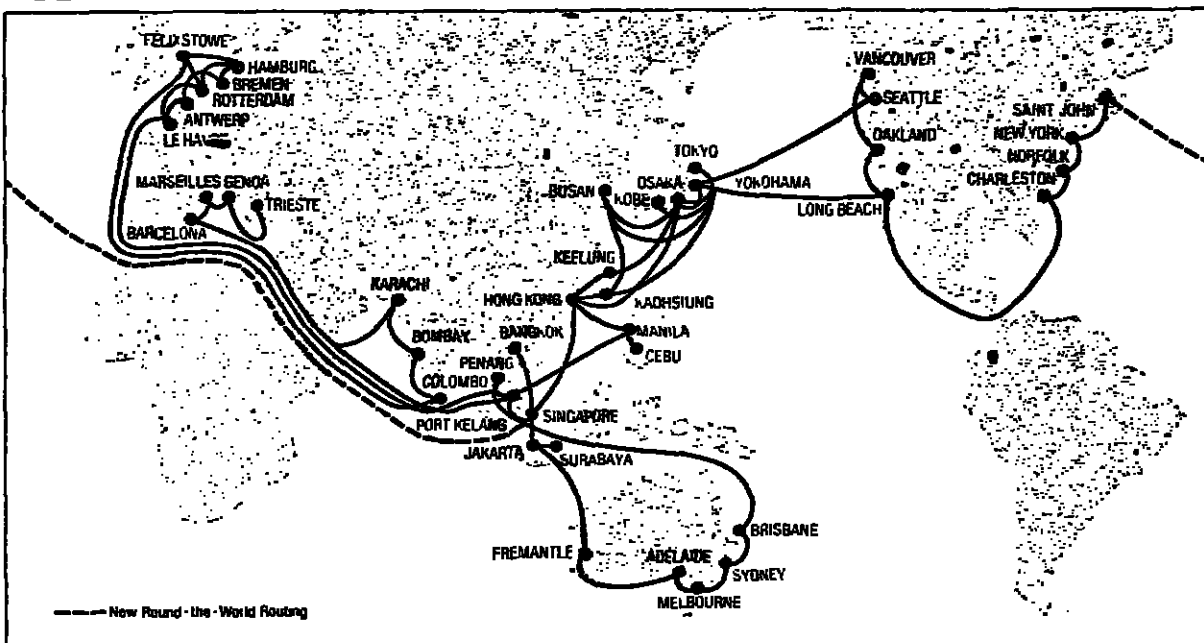
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## SINGAPORE 2

## The year the miracle failed to work

### Economy

KIERAN COOKE

FOR YEARS, Singapore has felt isolated from the many economic vicissitudes visited on other countries. As others floundered, it progressed. Dubbed a modern day economic miracle, Singapore adopted an almost arrogant faith in its own invulnerability as the economy expanded and an ever greater level of affluence was attained. But in 1985 the bluster suddenly disappeared. Singapore, said the deputy prime minister, Mr Goh Chok Tong, was in a state of economic crisis.

Just how deep and how prolonged that crisis will be—or if in fact there is a crisis—is still difficult to gauge. Alarm has revolved round a government forecast that this year, for the first time since self-rule began more than 25 years ago, Singapore will have zero and possibly negative economic growth. The news was a shock to a country which through the 'seventies' had experienced many years of double digit growth. In 1983, overall growth went up by 7.9 per cent, last year it went up by 3.2 per cent. Most feel it will be some time, if ever, before such figures are achieved again.

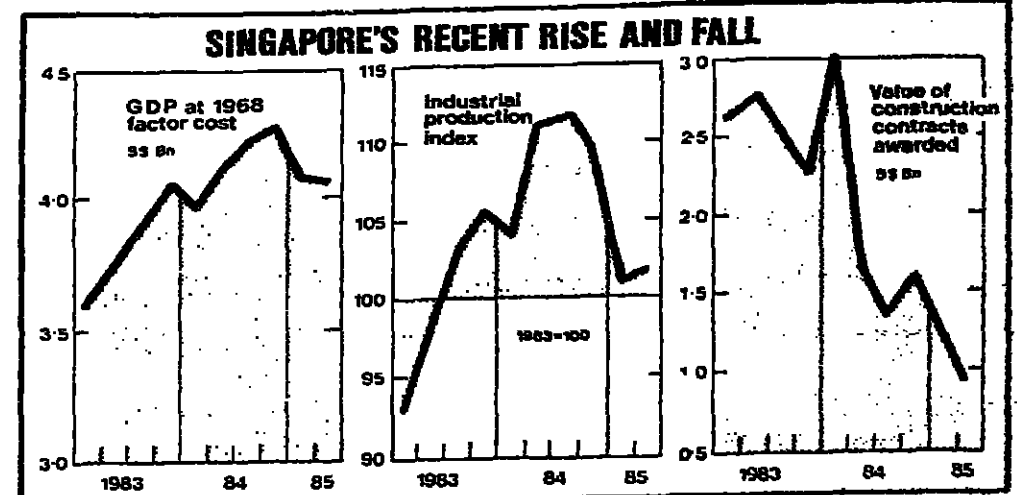
Singapore is acutely sensitive to external economic factors and the general downturn in the growth of world trade over the last 12 months has done a lot of damage. In particular, declining growth in demand in the United States—which over the past two years has supplanted Malaysia as Singapore's biggest export market—has had a severe impact on the economy.

In 1983 exports to the U.S. led by electronics equipment and other manufactured goods, went up by 53 per cent. Last year they rose by 25 per cent, worth \$810.29bn, while total exports went up 11 per cent, worth \$881bn. Growth in exports to the U.S. this year is unlikely to exceed 10 per cent while overall export growth is expected to be under 3 per cent.

### Fall in imports

A drop in imports over recent months narrowed Singapore's trade deficit in August 1985 to \$84.96bn compared to \$86.62bn at the same time last year. However, as nearly 40 per cent of total exports are made up of re-exports, declining imports are hardly a welcome sign—a reflection both of the general trading downturn and the weak price for commodities shipped through Singapore from Indonesia and Malaysia.

Already many industries have been forced to lay off workers. In his National Day speech the Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, said that in the first half of 1985, 27,800 jobs were lost in manufacturing, shipyards had lost 4,100 jobs while textile and electronics had together lost just under 5,000 jobs. Such labour reductions, unheard of in previous years, have continued. Officially declared bankruptcies rose by 20 per cent in the first eight months of 1985 while new company



registrations have fallen by 50 per cent.

The so-called engines of economic growth in past years, oil refining and shipbuilding, have been particularly badly hit. Downturn in oil demand in Japan has been one reason for the refining slowdown in Singapore, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.

In the first six months of 1985 the republic's refineries, which together constitute the third largest refining centre in the world, have been operating at only about 55 per cent of their installed capacity.

Singapore's shipbuilding and repair industry has suffered from the worldwide shipping slump and few see hope of any permanent recovery. Forecasts say that before any profitability can be achieved, up to 40 per cent of deck capacity will have to be closed, with the loss of a substantial amount of relatively recent investment.

Rig building and design has come to an almost complete standstill as exploration activities generally have dropped off and as Singapore's importance as a servicing centre for the oil industry in neighbouring Indonesia has declined.

Though work on a \$55bn mass transit system is in full swing, the construction industry has gone into a deep slump. In the second quarter of 1985, construction activity declined by 15 per cent, compared with an 18 per cent growth in the same period last year.

Construction of government financed public housing has peaked and with few large private projects in the pipeline, the outlook is bleak. The property market, long the favoured investment area of local businessmen has slumped and there is little belief in an upturn in the near or even distant future. Tourism, which contributes 16 per cent of foreign exchange earnings and 6 per cent of GDP, is an important ingredient in Singapore's economic health. But after a 5 per cent growth in tourist arrivals last year reaching nearly three million there has been a slowdown in the second quarter of the year. Total tourist arrivals went down by 0.6 per cent.

While hotels and shops have been forced to cut their rates and their profit margins substantially, high prices alone are not responsible for the drop off in the tourist industry. More disturbingly there is evidence that Singapore's attractions are

diminishing: for the most part old Singapore has been knocked down.

Tourists complain it is now a duplicate of most other modern cities around the world. Government efforts to build "theme parks" and hold regular festival extravaganzas are unlikely to have a great deal of impact on arrivals.

### Affluence

Singapore's growth as a financial and business centre has not been up to earlier expectations and the economic downturn has had its effects. Value added by the financial and business services sector registered an annual growth rate of 2.3 per cent in the third quarter of 1985 compared to an 8.2 per cent growth in the same period last year.

But in the midst of all this gloom and doom, Singapore hardly has the look of a country in crisis. Its port, the third busiest in the world, is still crammed with ships. Booking is essential at the more pricey restaurants.

Immaculately preened and affluent looking youngsters and yuppies parade down Orchard Road, the main shopping thoroughfare. While the Singapore dollar has been allowed to slide in value against most leading currencies, the Government moved decisively late in the year to counteract downward speculation on its value. Traders got badly burnt as the monetary authority bought in large amounts of its own currency; any devaluation is firmly ruled out.

Singapore now has a per capita income well in excess of U.S.\$8,000 per year, higher than Spain or Greece and on par with Italy. Its affluence stands in stark contrast to its neighbouring Asian countries, its problems seem minute by comparison.

Singapore has total reserves of U.S.\$10bn. Unofficially, the figure is said to be considerably higher. It has no debts, a highly developed infrastructure, an educated workforce and a relatively quiescent electorate. While many small businesses have been hit, the crisis is still largely at the theoretical stage for most Singaporeans. Foreign workers have cushioned the worst effects of the downturn: so far this year well over 30,000 Malaysians, Sri Lankans, Thais, Filipinos and to a lesser extent South Koreans have been sent home.

"We (Singaporeans) are nowhere near having an unemployment problem in Singapore," says Mr Daniel Seetaraman of the Singapore Economic Development Board. But gradually, Singaporeans themselves are likely to feel the pinch of the new economic realities.

The government, which has exercised an overwhelming influence on both economic and political development, has already served notice that its policy of encouraging high wages is under review. The Prime Minister argues that Singapore is pricing itself out of business: in recent years wages have been going up by 10 per cent a year and now are almost twice the level of those in Hong Kong, a key competitor. Now is the time, it is argued, for a more flexible, pragmatic approach to wages. "We should not force wages down. What we need is wage restraint or a pause in wage increases," says Mr Lee. In future, the influence of the National Wages Council, which has recommended across the board annual wage increases, will diminish.

While talk of wage restraint is unlikely to bring Singaporeans onto the streets, it does cause alarm. At the moment, the Government is putting together a new economic plan: a special economic committee chaired by minister of trade and industry defence, Brigadier-General Lee Hsien Loong, is due to make its recommendations before the end of the year.

The Government is seriously concerned about a downturn in new investment, especially from overseas. New incentives, including a drop in corporation tax, are likely to be announced. In the first eight months of 1985 total new investment was down by 30 per cent on the same period in 1984, at \$480m. Japanese and EEC investment dropped particularly sharply resulting, says the Government, in an overdependence on the U.S.

The Government plans to give more incentive and direction to the so-called sunrise industries which it is hoped will usher in a new period of economic growth — biotech, genetic engineering, medical supplies. "Unless companies can operate more profitably in Singapore than in our competitor countries, particularly the other newly industrialising countries, existing companies will be forced to relocate and the new high technology companies that we desire to have will not come here," a report of the economic committee says.

More cash is also likely to be pumped into the economy: the Government has ample resources, especially through the central provident fund—a mandatory retirement savings scheme to which employers and employees each contribute 25 per cent of gross pay. But will these measures be enough? Singapore certainly still has a lot going for it.

It has lost none of the geographical advantages from the days when Raffles first stepped ashore in 1819. It is a vital entrepot, perched on one of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

General. But it could be having a completely different conversation in two years' time," one analyst said. But there are uncertainties. Serious problems could arise if investment does not pick up.

Local companies often seem unwilling to put money into the domestic economy, even when they are holding fat reserves. The younger generation of Singaporean businessmen seem to have intent in playing the markets than sinking their money in new ventures. Much depends on the success of new product lines.

Many feel that Singaporeans have become too pampered by a government that has supervised the remarkable progress achieved. "There is," said one banker, "a remarkable insularity, a lack of initiative, a lack of true entrepreneurial zeal."

Lee Kuan Yew is a man rarely stuck for an analogy. In a recent speech he compared the present state of Singapore to mountain climbing. The higher you go, the more strenuous but also the more exhilarating things become. In 1985, the Singapore economy also found itself badly out of breath, rather fat and flabby and not entirely sure of the right direction.

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It has further potential to develop as a major servicing centre of the ASEAN countries, and to play a pivotal role in the development of a region seen as one of the galvanising forces of world trade over the next ten years.

Generally, it has laid the foundations for future growth. Singapore's very size makes it easily manoeuvrable, able to adjust quickly to the increasingly volatile patterns of world trade and of the global economy.

"Now the talk is all of problems. But it could be having a completely different conversation in two years' time," one analyst said. But there are uncertainties. Serious problems could arise if investment does not pick up.

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## Challenges ahead

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

ever, the case for loosening government controls and allowing greater play to market forces is gaining ground and some substantial changes are likely before the year is out. The special committee chaired by Brigadier-General Lee Hsien Loong has been asked to make recommendations to the government aimed at aiding the economic recovery and these are likely to include some important new measures.

What is at stake in Singapore's ability to set itself back on a path to becoming a service-centre by using some of its undoubted advantages over its neighbours in Asia.

New doors will have to be opened such as trade with China, especially since neighbours like Malaysia and Indonesia have embarked on direct trade with the People's Republic, cutting out Singapore's traditional role as middleman.

The economic committee's reforms are likely to include a lowering of corporate tax rates in a bid to attract foreign investment, and fatten up bank balances, a more flexible wage bargaining system, less government interference in setting prices and a freer use of funds to stimulate growth. Nearly 40 per cent of Singapore's gross national product is tied up in savings. With foreign exchange reserves of around 25bn Singapore dollars this leaves plenty of scope for manoeuvre.

More privatisation of industries is likely and although this has not been explicitly stated, less government funding of industry. The fundamentals will probably remain untouched, however.

The government's commitment to a strong currency which Mr Lee Kuan Yew personally regards as a pillar of the country's image as a stable and safe place to invest seems unshakable "there is no question of using the exchange rate to bring earnings down," said one minister.

There is unlikely to be, as some have urged, a cut in the contribution by individuals and enterprises to the central provident fund, Singapore's compulsory savings scheme although the capital invested will be put to better use.

This reluctance to use some of the more radical measures available to stimulate exports and bring about an improvement in productivity has already produced some tension between the technocrats in the government and the old-time political leadership. By the time the proposals for change come out in December, however, all differences will be ironed out and the government will present its customary, united face.

Whether all this will be enough to revive the economy or whether more drastic measures will be needed later remains to be seen. The likelihood is that the rosy days of double digit growth are gone for ever. Singapore is a maturing economy which must set itself more realistic targets.

What is unmistakable, however, is a willingness in the government to recognise Singapore's problems and to tackle them. And that is more than can be said for many governments.



PROFILE: LEE HSIEN LOONG

# A suitable case of natural selection

LEE KUAN YEW, Singapore's prime minister, believes that the success of a society will depend, in the long run, on the quality of its genes—among other things. This is a belief which is bound to have been reinforced by his own experience and, in particular, the case of his eldest son Lee Hsien Loong, whose meteoric rise to power is due at least as much to his own abilities as to the fact that he is the prime minister's son.

In the few short months since his election to parliament in December 1984, Hsien Loong has enjoyed almost as spectacular a rise as he did in his previous incarnation in Singapore's small but perfectly formed armed forces. There he went from being commanding officer of an artillery battalion to chief of the general staff in the space of four short years.

He is now barely 33 and a junior minister with two important portfolios: defence and trade and industry. More important, he has been given the key job of overseeing the work of a specially appointed economic committee to look into Singapore's economic options for the future. The job places Hsien Loong at the eye of the economic storm which has broken over Singapore and therefore also in the centre of the stage.

Inevitably he is being talked of as a candidate for the leadership of the Ruling People's Action Party (PAP) and a future prime minister. The talk of succession is premature. Apart from the fact that Hsien Loong is so young, the prime minister is likely to remain in control for some years to come. Nevertheless, in the past few months the soldier-turned-politician has been given an unusually high profile in the Singapore press and television, and he must be regarded as a legitimate contender for the leadership.

Hsien Loong himself seems unpretentiously aware of his own potential. "If people think I'm fit for the job," he said in an interview, "and I'm in line, I think that's good. If they have doubts about me and I'm still in line then that's a very big problem."

He is anxious to dispel the notion that he is being groomed for the job and that it will, in time, simply fall into his lap.

"You cannot," he said, "create a prime minister. He must emerge. He has to prove himself," but he adds with characteristic determination "he must also want it and he must grasp it."

Few people have accused the Prime Minister of nepotism in promoting his son although most people agree that the pace of Hsien Loong's advancement is extraordinary. "Nevertheless if he's got where he is," said a diplomat, "it's largely due to his own efforts. Of course being the prime minister's son was not exactly a handicap and there is no doubt where the prime minister wants his son to end up in due course. But the son is genuinely capable."

More important, some observers see Hsien Loong as one of the few young politicians in the PAP with a genuine flair for politics. With the exception of the prime minister and a tiny coterie of old-timers Singapore is ruled by technocrats who execute rather than formulate policy, hence the apprehension about what happens when Lee Kuan Yew disappears from the scene along with his political skills.

## Master's degree

Hsien Loong is undoubtedly bright. He took a first in mathematics at Cambridge University and later went on to take a master's degree in public administration at Harvard.

He is articulate and appears to have a thorough grasp of the subjects he discusses. Like other PAP leaders he has been coached in the art of public speaking and debate by imported media specialists from Britain although he remains slightly stiff in public.

Hsien Loong says Singapore must deal with the world "as it is and not as we would like to be." In what some have taken as implied criticism of his father's utopian view of what the island-state could become.

He concedes that the Government has become unpopular. The elections last December when the opposition captured more than 33 per cent of the popular vote, he said, reflected "some discontent, some concern, some unease over policies."

Although he believes that there is nothing uniquely Singaporean in this he says the



Lee Hsien Loong, eldest son of Prime Minister Lee: soldier-turned-politician

Government must work harder at persuading people and must listen to them more carefully.

Despite his differences from the older generation of Singapore's leaders, however—"what is wrong with having fun," he once asked—he shares some of their more paternalistic attitudes. In particular, his father's obsession with natural selection.

Observers say he has become more serious since assuming office though this may be partly due to the fact that he was recently widowed.

Philosophically he seems more committed to open market economic policies than some of Singapore's older leaders and professes to have no ideological preconceptions. He would like to see less government control of the economy and more industries privatised.

Hsien Loong, although professing firm commitment to the idea of one man one vote, sees limits to the degree of democracy that is good for Singapore. He believes an opposition must be "plausible, reasonable and sensible." The population, he says, must be educated not to vote tactically by which he means against a government as opposed to for the opposition.

What Singapore is looking for, he says, is a system "where grievances can be aired, aspirations brought out and hopes communicated. I believe we've got that." But he concedes that there is also firm control and if the government-controlled Straits Times newspaper does not "take a rabidly anti-government line" that is probably as it should be.

Hsien Loong, in many ways, his father's ideal Singaporean: academically successful, rational, morally robust and ambitious. Although he may have to wait until the present second generation leadership has a crack at the top job after the prime minister, his chances of getting there must be better than even.

Alain Cass

## Politics

ALAIN CASS

EARLIER THIS year Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew returned from an official visit to Indonesia. When he landed at Singapore's clinically efficient Changi airport he was greeted by hundreds of taxi drivers hooting their horns at him.

The drivers were angry because their customers had deserted them after the Government had doubled taxi fares and, at the same time increased the levy on hire vehicles. Within weeks the Government backtracked and rescinded most of the edict and peace was restored.

There are two significant aspects to this little vignette. The first is that the taxi drivers demonstrated at all, and of all people, against the prime minister who is beginning to acquire mythological status. Opposition in Singapore that is not quietly and sensibly purveyed tends to get hounded, jailed or expelled.

The second intriguing aspect of the event was that the Government backed down. Mr Lee's sense of moral rectitude is legendary and his Government is not known for giving into pressure—least of all noisy, public pressure. So why did it?

The answer lies in last December's elections which marked a turning point in Singapore's political history. For the first time since the ruling People's Action Party came to power in 1959 the opposition gained a major share of the vote.

The PAP's share of the vote fell from 75.5 per cent in 1980 to 62.9 per cent—a swing against the Government of more than 13 per cent. At the same time the main opposition parties captured over 33 per cent of the vote.

What seems clear—and this has given the Government some heart—is the most voters voted against the PAP rather than for the Opposition out of a sense of frustration and resentment at the more intrusive aspect of life under the ruling party.

It is too early to say whether Singapore's political awakening is an irreversible trend. Certainly it confirms that the by-election victory in 1981 in the Anson constituency of Mr Ben Jeyaratnam, the first ever dent in the PAP's armour, was no fluke.

# The PAP reaches a crossroads

of the votes cast. A second MP was elected from the Worker's Party to the 78-seat assembly and, while this hardly constitutes a mortal danger to the PAP, it does, for the first time, seriously dent its aura of invincibility.

It could have been worse. The Workers' Party also polled more than 40 per cent of the vote in four other seats. Considering that most of their candidates and those of the other two serious opposition parties—the Singapore Democratic Party and the Singapore United Front—were inexperienced and, in many cases, considered lucky that they contested for fewer than the total number of seats.

However, while Mr Lee bestrides his tiny stage like a colossus and the calibre of the opposition remains poor the chances of a major upset are slim.

## Concern

Nevertheless, there is some concern among PAP leaders, especially the younger ones, that the party did get out of touch with its popular base and that a number of the more unpopular measures introduced before the elections might have been withheld if the Government had had its finger on the pulse of popular opinion more firmly.

Mr Lee's determination to push through a self-renewal policy, however necessary, has provoked some dissension within the party. Party veterans who had served the PAP for years were summarily overlooked for higher political service as fresh blood was introduced.

This process, which began as far back as 1972, has been relentless. Young men and women deemed to be suitable are picked, fielded at the general election and, soon after, propelled into high office. Incumbent MPs have been cast aside to make room for the new guard.

In the 1984 general election the PAP fielded 26 first-timers, its biggest ever number of new recruits, among them Brigadier-General Lee Hsien Loong, the prime minister's son. Hsien Loong has since been given three important government posts and is being openly talked about as a future prime minister.

The PAP has certainly been sufficiently shaken out of its complacency to take a critical look at itself in the hope of preventing what some senior figures fear could happen which is a freak win by the opposition in response to a deepening economic recession and unpopular government policies.

The PAP has ruled Singapore virtually without constraint for nearly 20 years. But just as 1981 witnessed a basic change in the party because of the split between the communists and their fellow travellers, on the one hand, and the more moderate democratic socialists, on the other, in order to prepare for a more closely multi-racial party in 1984 could turn out to be an equally important turning point.

Last December's election results coincided with and gave impetus to an attempt by the old guard in the party to transfer power to their chosen and younger successors.

Mr Lee's determination to push through a self-renewal policy, however necessary, has provoked some dissension within the party. Party veterans who had served the PAP for years were summarily overlooked for higher political service as fresh blood was introduced.

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This process of "pruning branches" as first deputy prime minister Goh Chok Tong calls it, has been partly in response to the fact that a new generation of voters whose actions are unpredictable has emerged. These young voters were born after the PAP came to power in 1959 and have grown up without the knowledge or memory of the early political struggles and difficult times. They have, therefore, greater expectations.

In 1984 first time voters aged between 21 and 24 years old numbered 215,000 or 14 per cent of the electorate. The need to meet the aspirations of this rapidly changing political base is one of the biggest challenges facing the PAP in coming years.

## Grievances

Since the elections the Government has been anxious to demonstrate its concern for people's grievances. In a typically institutionalised way a "feedback unit" was set up to encourage the public to complain. Local newspapers have been encouraged to print letters attacking the bureaucracy and government policies. Ministers and MPs have been encouraged to "listen to the people."

At a different level, Singapore is pressing ahead with its plan to remodel the political system around the fact that the prime minister is close to retirement age. Mr Lee has said he will step down at the age of 65—he is now 62—and that he wants a smooth and orderly succession.

Constitutional amendments are now being framed and will eventually be put to Parliament. These will allow for an elected President with some executive powers, primarily to prevent a future government going on a spending spree which depletes the country's vast reserves which Mr Lee sees as fundamental to the country's external

confidence.

The new presidential system will effectively ensure that Mr Lee, like the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, retains effective control of the country's major policy decisions when he is elevated to the presidency. This, in itself, is bound to change the balance of power within the Government and, possibly, the nature of democracy in Singapore.

When this happens the major question will be: who succeeds Mr Lee? The front-runner must be the present first deputy prime minister Mr Goh Chok Tong who has hinted that when Mr Lee vacates his present office a new style of leadership, less dogmatic, less paternalistic, may take its place.

This seems doubtful, partly because Mr Lee himself will be still very much a force to be reckoned with and partly because most of his colleagues share his view that Singapore had to remain a morally robust society if it is to survive.

The preferred scenario for the future is that the constitutional changes will be in force within two years and that, shortly before the next General Election—which has to take place by 1989 but which traditionally comes a year earlier—Mr Lee will step down as PAP leader and prime minister and submit himself as Singapore's first elected President.

His son, Lee Hsien Loong, is being increasingly talked of as a future prime minister. But it seems unlikely that he will succeed his father immediately. A more likely bet is Mr Goh or possibly one of his rivals who would lead the PAP into the next election and that Hsien Loong would get his chance sometime after that.

Between now and then, however, the PAP acknowledges that it has to work hard to make up lost ground, let alone reverse a trend which could, if it continues, produce a major upset in the future.

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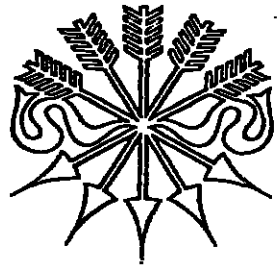
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## Confidence takes a knock

### Manufacturing

KIERAN COOKE

IN LATE 1983 Lamipak Industries, a local Singapore company, was forced to call in the liquidators. Like many other companies 5000 the world the recession had finally caught up. With debts estimated at \$8150m, cash flow problems just became too difficult to bear. In Singapore the news created a small sensation. Lamipak, which has plastic packaging operations in Singapore and several other countries, had been seen as something of a model company, often cited as one of the Republic's most innovative and successful concerns.

Confidence is everything in Singapore and with the not so reputable and the good alike going to the wall, the present downturn has severely shaken faith in the resilience and resourcefulness of the economy. While the construction sector has taken the brunt in terms of job losses—in the second quarter of 1985 alone more than 43,000 jobs were lost in the industry—manufacturing has also been hurt and many thousands of jobs lost as output has declined by 8.3 per cent compared with the second quarter of 1984.

The manufacturing sector is looked on as the prime mover of the economy: it contributes about 20 per cent of GDP and more than 50 per cent of foreign exchange earnings. More than 27 per cent of Singapore's 1.2m workforce are employed in manufacturing. Over the last two years growth in the sector has been healthy, if not entirely up to expectations. Last year overall output rose by 9 per cent compared with only 2 per cent in 1983. The electronics industry has been the star performer. Last year its output expanded by 50 per cent, by considerable growth in world demand, particularly in the United States.

Almost all the major electronics companies have substantial production facilities in Singapore: the Republic is now frequently referred to as "Silicon Island". Output has become increasingly diverse and sophisticated. "Singapore now hovers at the bottom end of Silicon Valley, somewhere above Taiwan and South Korea but behind western Europe in terms of electronics know how and technology" said an industry analyst.

But as demand abroad has dropped off, electronics production at home has had to be phased down. In the second quarter of 1985 output went down by 7.1 per cent compared with the first quarter of the year. More than 8,000 jobs were lost. The industry is now working itself up for the move into other areas of higher technology which, it is hoped, will provide salvation in the years ahead. The buzz words and phrases that fall from the lips of Singapore's planners indicate that the future has already arrived: the talk now is of robotics, genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, informatics and bio-technology.

Already, the Government has made substantial investments in a whole range of educational programmes designed to feed these new industries, and the planners are confident that their efforts will be rewarded. "If, out of five sectors we move into, one is a success, then we should be all right," says Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. But no one expects the electronics industry to bounce back immediately. Meanwhile other major industries such as petrochemicals and shipbuilding have seriously declined.

Until recently both industries provided the main stimulus to Singapore's growth. Last year total trade in mineral products was \$330.1m—down from \$435.5m in 1982 but still representing Singapore's second largest trading sector after machinery and transport equipment.

Singapore is now the world's third largest refining centre, with a total installed capacity of 1.1m barrels a day. Shell has almost half the total installed

capacity and is a key element in the overall health of the economy. When the company announced in mid-year it was permanently closing one of its four main refining plants, co-occur was raised about the whole future of the refining industry in Singapore.

The refining industry has been hit not only by a decrease in demand, particularly in Japan, for fuel oils but also by the increased self-sufficiency in refining of producer countries. Singapore has traditionally refined crudes from Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. Large petrochemical complexes in Saudi Arabia are now coming on stream; over the last eighteen months three large refineries have been inaugurated in Indonesia. The result has been a big drop in processing contracts, with overall utilisation of installed capacity dropping down to 55 per cent. Many say further plant closures are inevitable.

But the outlook is not entirely bleak: in the past Singapore's refining industry has shown itself to be remarkably flexible and able to find alternative supply sources and markets. Growth in related areas, such as chemicals and glass manufacture has been encouraging. There has also been a flurry of processing contracts: China and Australia both signed contracts for processing 100,000 b/d till the end of the year. Troubles with Indonesia's refinery start-up programme have resulted in some continued processing of Indonesian crudes in Singapore. Contracts have also been signed with the Malaysian state oil company, Petronas. "The prospects for the industry are gloomy but not calamitous" said an oil executive.

Any bright spots in the shipbuilding and repair industry are difficult to find. Some yards including a 400,000 dwt repair dock—a joint venture between the Singapore government and the Japanese—have already been closed. It is estimated that about a third of the 20,000 workers in the industry, mostly foreign nationals have lost their jobs.

U.S. consultants commis-

sioned to look at the prospects of Singapore's yards are reported to have recommended a drastic reduction in capacity, including the complete closure of two yards at Keppel Shipyard, 68 per cent government owned.

The government seems reluctant to take such action: instead it says rationalisation of existing facilities, plus some retrenchments is the answer. The Prime Minister blames both managers and workers for acting irrationally—pressing for higher pay awards as profits have declined in recent years. Mr Lee refuses to countenance the idea that the shipyards are a sunset industry. Harking back to the vision of Raffles he says: "We have the advantage of a special location. We are astride one of the major shipping lanes in the world... we have the competitive edge."

While Singapore's importance as a shipbuilding centre has declined it has rapidly become a hub of the aerospace industry in the region. More than 20 companies servicing the industry in one way or another now have facilities in the Republic. Again, good local conditions including one of the world's finest airports and a highly skilled workforce, have been Singapore's main attractions. Nearly 4,500 people are now employed in aerospace and the industry's output last year went up 13 per cent to \$547m.

Alked to the aerospace industry is Singapore's growing importance as a servicing centre and manufacturer of military equipment. It has a wide range of bombs and ammunition and various other equipment. While no figures are available, it has clearly built itself up into one of the more important exporters of the Republic's armaments and is said to be posing increasing challenges to arms suppliers like Israel and Brazil.

## Foreign workers feel the pinch

### Labour

ALAIN CASS

SINGAPORE MAY be suffering from a number of economic problems but mass unemployment is not one of them.

While thousands of workers have lost their jobs in the recession most of these have come from the vast pool of foreign labour which underpins the economy and which the Government can use conveniently to cushion its own people from the worst effects of a slowdown. Indeed, while the industrialised West is grappling with the social and political consequences of chronic unemployment, Singapore has been able to expand its workforce may not expand fast enough to keep pace with its economic growth over the next decade.

Professor Saw Swee Hock of the National University of Singapore has projected that the island state's total workforce will grow from 1.12m in 1980 to 1.34m in 1995. At the same time, the percentage of young people joining the labour force has been declining while, with better medical services and rising standards of living, the population as a whole is ageing. From a position of high unemployment in the 1960s and early 1960s—at its peak in 1962 over 15 per cent of the workforce was out of work—Singapore quickly tackled the problem as growth rates shot into double figures. By 1970 unemployment was reduced to 6 per cent and had been virtually eliminated by the mid-seventies.

Today Singapore employs some 150,000 foreign workers to fill the gap.

Last year, according to the Government, the Employment Service registered 12,258 job seekers against 25,832 vacancies. Of course that was before the present savage recession in which around 50,000 foreign workers have been summarily sent home and a smaller number

of Singaporeans have also lost their jobs—however temporarily.

Singapore's economy is historically founded on foreign labour and, for the foreseeable future, this fact may well save the Government from facing the spectre of mass unemployment of its citizens which Singapore and, in time, may even be offered citizenship rights.

Singapore has encouraged the admission of foreign workers into the island state for three reasons over the past two decades. The first is simply that many Singaporeans simply will not do some of the menial, production and domestic jobs which have to be done.

The effect of high growth rates, of the "economic miracle" has been to raise expectations to a level where, for most Singaporeans, being a maid or a building worker is virtually unthinkable. Besides which, the country's predominantly Chinese population regards making money by going into business as the only honourable occupation.

The second reason for allowing a controlled inflow of foreigners is to "spur" local workers to do better. "There is nothing like the bitter, real-life experience of having to hunt for a job," Mr Goh Chok Tong, the first deputy prime minister says, echoing words which would have done Mrs Thatcher proud. "And finding it difficult to get one to make Singaporeans take seriously the call to increase productivity." The Government regards this

imperative as even more valid as wages and productivity grow further apart.

The third reason—and this applies to professional classes and the highly skilled—is to improve the country's permanent pool of expertise. Such immigrants are encouraged to make their home in Singapore and, in time, may even be offered citizenship rights.

Against that, it should be said, the restrictions placed on unskilled workers are severe and, in some cases, demeaning. The Government's policy, however, is to phase out the country's dependence on unskilled foreign workers by the end of the decade. By that time

similar per capita incomes such as Spain or Brazil this is still far from impressive.

Recent studies have also shown that foreign workers tend to be better educated than their Singaporean counterparts despite the country's vast efforts in this direction.

Economic restructuring in Singapore means a shift away from the unskilled and towards the skilled and highly qualified professional, technical and managerial workers. This applies to both foreign and local labour.

In the view, therefore, of some observers the present round of bloodletting may not be a bad thing for Singapore, where the economy has been stuck in the middle-technology groove for too long.

So far this year well over 50,000 Malaysians, Sri Lankans, Filipinos and South Koreans have been sent home. The labour force has been reduced in those sectors which have either become uncompetitive because of Singapore's high wages policy (manufacturing); have fallen foul of the local slump (construction); or are suffering from the slowdown in external demand (electronics).

The Government is fortunate, in this respect, in having a controlled union sector which, if anything, appears to be getting less militant. There is widespread concern that membership of the government-controlled National Trade Union Congress (NTUC) is falling rapidly, even though the number of workers eligible for membership is rising.

The challenge now for Singapore is to allocate its scarce resources in such a way as to reduce its dependence on low-productivity, foreign-labour intensive industries to much higher productivity, high-technology sectors.

This would have the effect of reducing overall labour demand and increase the domestic labour supply and thus reduce the need for other than highly skilled or professional foreign

### Labour force projections

Year	Total	Male	Female
1980	1,115m	730,000	385,000
1985	1,224m	815,000	409,000
1990	1,296m	879,700	416,400
1995	1,342m	925,200	417,000

Source: Labour force projections 1980-2070, Saw Swee Hock.

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## Changes ahead on deregulation

**AFTER LAST** year's stock market slump in Singapore, there had been hopes that the market would regain some of its lost sparkle in 1985. So far there has been no dazzling performance and for most of the year Singapore has remained near the bottom of the world league.

Persistently weak share prices have also meant that in terms of market capitalisation Singapore has had to concede the number two slot in the Far East to Hong Kong.

In line with poor sentiment, the number of new entrants has dwindled falling from an already low 11 newcomers in 1984—of which just six were Singapore companies and the rest Malaysians—to just eight so far this year, none of which is Singapore-incorporated.

Likewise there has been no stampede to raise funds from the market. Only three Singapore companies made a rights issue in the first six months of this year compared with six companies for the whole of last year.

All these figures do reflect the economic downturn. But as the republic faces its first major economic crunch in 20 years it has been forced into much soul searching. As part of the work being done under the economic committee, headed by Brigadier General Lee Hsien Loong, bankers, brokers and policy makers have been examining the entire securities industry in an effort to see how it can be expanded, modernised and made more efficient.

Although their final deliberations are not going to be known until later in the year, it is obvious that the securities team plans to use this opportunity to pinpoint the weakness in the current market and recommend sufficient changes to allow the stock market to become an integral part in developing Singapore as a financial centre.

The recently-formed team has a good chance of success. After years of talk about the need for some kind of junior stock-market, the Monetary Authority of Singapore and Economic Development Board announced in September that it was planning to establish an unlisted securities market, using London's U.S.M. as a model, in the second half of next year.

It should come as a relief to young companies who cannot meet the Stock Exchange of Singapore's stringent listing re-

quirements and ought to help entrepreneurs, now a buzz word in recession-struck Singapore.

Little has been decided yet about the proposed Unlisted Securities Market. But one telling detail was revealed when the plan was officially announced. Banks and other financial institutions are to be allowed to deal directly on the second securities market, signalling the end of the monopoly held by local brokers on the stock exchange.

Just what it will mean eventually for share dealing on the

### Stock Market

LORETTE McLAUGHLIN

main market is anyone's guess at this stage. But it demonstrates that Singapore is aware of the need to develop its market-making capabilities in line with major financial capitals.

Deregulation is no distinct phenomenon. Pressure to upgrade local broking houses and systems comes not so much from New York or London but from the sister exchange in Kuala Lumpur.

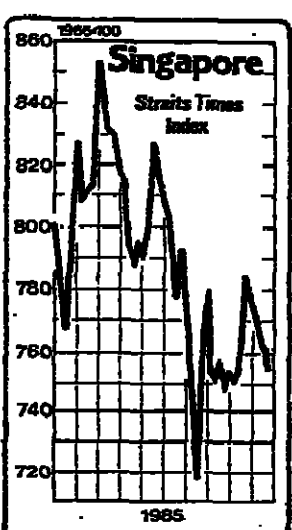
Not only has Kuala Lumpur already taken the volume lead at times this year but it has taken all the initiative in what officials call "corporatisation" of brokerage firms.

Consequently, the rule which prohibits financial institutions from taking a stake in a Singapore stockbroking company is likely to be rethought.

Another big problem which the securities team has to address is how to improve the market's depth and breadth. Large investors complain that there is a shortage of big, tradable blue chips—notwithstanding the launch of Singapore Airlines at the end of the year—among the 300 or so listed companies.

It is impossible to be exact but it is thought that only a fifth of the total market capitalisation is traded at any one time as the bulk of the stock of each listed company is tightly held by controlling shareholders. As a result share price movements can often be erratic and illiquidity is a common complaint.

The man in the street is well-



### Trade and foreign investment

KIERAN COOKE

**SINCE THE** foundation of modern Singapore trade has been central to its survival. When export growth took a dive this year, the rest of the economy plunged down with it.

In 1984 Singapore's exports (including re-exports) swelled by 11 per cent to reach a value of \$851.3bn. Estimates for export growth this year vary between 1 per cent and 3.5 per cent total trade in the first eight months of 1985 fell 3 per cent to \$873bn compared with the same period last year, mainly due to a decline in imports.

The trade deficit has narrowed this year—from \$86.62bn in August 1984 to \$84.96bn in the same month last year. Re-exports, which account for just under 40 per cent of total exports have generally performed better than domestic exports in recent months. So far this year they have grown by a healthy 5 per cent. While the trade downturn has had its repercussions throughout the economy, causing alarm among even the most bullish of Singapore's supporters, in comparison with many countries the outlook is hardly all gloom.

Singapore has had its very good in recent years. Some would argue that last year's export growth was just too steep, causing severe distortions in the economy and only adding to present troubles. In future it is felt Singapore should try to achieve a more measured but prolonged growth in its trade.

**Distortions**  
It still remains in a very favourable trading position: its port is the third busiest in the world and its external trade accounts for more than three times its gross domestic product.

Last year trade contributed 15 per cent to GDP growth. With practically no resources and only two and a half million people it ranks in terms of total trade equal to Spain and only just below South Korea.

Singapore's leading trading partners are the United States, Malaysia, Japan and the EEC. The downturn in demand in the U.S. and, to a lesser extent, in

Japan has been the main cause for the pause in trading growth.

In each of the past two years the U.S. has surpassed Malaysia in Singapore's total trade. In 1984 the surplus in trade with the U.S. was \$1.1bn—the first time Singapore has had a trade surplus with a major trading partner since 1969.

Exports to the U.S. last year were worth \$10.29bn—up 23 per cent on 1983. A lot of the growth has come from various computer and electronic equipment, in particular home computers—a large proportion of which are produced by the many U.S. electronic multi-nationals with operations in Singapore.

Export growth to the U.S. in 1985 is likely to be more than halved. Total trade with Japan dropped 9 per cent in the quarter of 1985, mainly due to a sharp drop in imports. Generally, say traders, things are the worst they have been for some years. However, overall figures would look very different if very large earnings on invisibles were included.

One analyst calculates that in terms of net invisible earnings Singapore now ranks fifth in the world. These are not only comprised of banking and financial services: Singapore has been very successful in selling its expertise and services to the developing world. Port and airport management, plant operation and management, tourist industry services have all made a substantial contribution to export earnings.

In addition, as its refining industry has declined, Singapore has built itself up into an oil trading centre. It hopes to be just as important an oil trading centre as New York; already majors like Mobil, Shell and Exxon are doing considerable business.

The Government is taking steps to alleviate the difficult trading circumstances. It is likely that wages will go up much more gradually than in the past: there is also a move towards greater productivity—South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong all have considerably higher productivity levels than Singapore at present.

In the past Singapore has shown its flexibility by moving into new product lines: now it hopes to change again into areas of higher technology like sophisticated medical supplies, robotics and genetic engineering.

It is also looking at new markets. The great hope for the future is China. In September,

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew made an extensive tour of China during which he constantly emphasised the benefits to both his country and China of increased trade and business.

Several possible areas of co-operation were mentioned. "They are all attainable. Proposals like tourism, mutual co-operation in civil aviation, communications are practical, implementable," said Mr Lee. At present the two countries have no diplomatic relations—Singapore says it will not normalise till Indonesia and China resume diplomatic contacts. However, trade contacts between the two have been steadily growing. Singapore plans to have trading offices in Shanghai and Canton as well as the present one in Peking before the end of next year.

### Co-operation

China's state oil corporation, Sinochem, has recently opened an office in Singapore—a sign of the growing co-operation between the two countries in the oil sector.

China now ranks as Singapore's seventh largest trading partner with two way trade valued at \$83.4bn in 1984. Singaporean companies have been active in China for some time, particularly in the hotel and tourism industries and in civil engineering projects including port development. Singaporean investment in China is now estimated to exceed \$31bn.

There are other reasons for Singapore's optimism about the future of China trade: China has shown a growing desire for Singaporean participation in a number of major deals and something of a special relationship has developed, fostered not only by racial ties but also by common use of the mandarin language.

The architect of Singapore's economic success over the past 20 years, Dr Goh Keng Swee, has himself become a vital export item having been recruited as an adviser to China's ambitious programme of special economic zones. He is likely to preach the Singapore gospel loud and clear and in so doing it is hoped gain more business for the people back home.

India is another much touted target for the future growth of Singapore's trade and investment. For the moment, Singapore is making

efforts to sell its considerable expertise in oil exploration, servicing and supply. Its shipyards, stuck with excess capacity and empty order books, are hopeful of big orders: there is even talk of Singapore and India collaborating on rig building for export to the Soviet Union.

Loosening of trade restrictions in India has brought about a big surge in Singapore's exports: in 1984 exports to India went up by more than 50 per cent to \$81.3bn, mostly made up of machinery, electronic goods and other manufactured items.

The Australian market is also receiving increasing attention. Singaporean entrepreneurs like Jack Chua already own large tracts of real estate in Melbourne, Perth and other cities. They have also moved into other areas, mainly hotels or leisure related.

Australia now ranks as Singapore's eighth largest market: last year exports increased by 28 per cent to \$81.73bn. Both countries have expressed the wish for greater co-operation and the formation of more joint ventures. Parts of Africa, Latin America and closer to home, Burma, are other areas targeted for future trading growth.

Few believe that these new markets offer an instant panacea for all Singapore's trading problems. First, there has to be a change in the mix of Singapore's exports, allied to more sustained if lower demand in the U.S., Japan and Europe.

A banker described talk of a massive expansion in China trade as misleading and falsely optimistic: Singapore has come late to the China trade game, well behind Japan, the U.S. and European countries.

China is now facing severe financial constraints after heavy imports in recent years. At present it is unlikely to offer any big trading stimulus to Singapore. However, hopes still run high. "China is big enough for everybody," said the Trade Development Board. "There are over 400,000 factories there, all waiting to be upgraded. Singapore can do a lot."

Neither India nor Australia are in the best of economic health and Singapore will obviously have to work very hard to secure markets in those countries, till now largely ignored.

There are also some uncertainties about the ability of Singapore business to respond to the new circumstances. There are still only a few Singaporean entrepreneurs active in overseas markets. Many feel that Singapore companies, cushioned by largely Government sponsored growth in the home market, have not been sufficiently competitive or aggressive overseas.

Most money invested abroad tends to go into property rather than industrial joint ventures. While South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong have been pushing new investments into countries like Indonesia, Singapore seems content to sit on much of its capital. In the last five years Singapore has dropped from number 18 to 15 in the list of foreign investors in Indonesia.

As neighbouring countries gear up their economies, the challenge becomes even greater. Indonesia has in the past three years become the world's biggest plywood exporter: the result has been the almost total elimination of Singapore's plywood industry and the loss of an important export item.

### Rearguard action

As protectionist sentiment grows, trade is not going to become easier: some countries are already questioning whether certain Singapore exports should continue to be given preferential treatment under the generalised scheme of preferences (GSP). At present Singapore receives GSP treatment from 16 countries.

Earlier this year New Zealand threatened to discontinue some aspects of the scheme: it later capitulated after a fierce rearguard action by Singapore. With a per capita income well over US\$6,000, Singapore will in future find it increasingly difficult to win the GSP argument.

Singapore is about to embark on its third industrial revolution. The first was in the 60s when the growth of modern-day Singapore was set in motion. The second was in the late 70s as the Republic moved into new industries, particularly electronics. Now it faces another change of direction as it moves into highly sophisticated areas like robotics and biotechnology. Whether or not the change is successful will be crucial to its future prosperity.

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## SINGAPORE 6

### Vital hub links East and West

#### Telecoms

JOYCE QUEK

SINGAPORE'S Telecommunications Authority of Singapore does not share the doom and gloom other enterprises project for 1985.

This is its year of living dangerously, advancing into more, better and cheaper services. Yet it does not sacrifice quality and, more importantly, for a reserve accumulating government profits.

It is already in the forefront of technology, scoring numerous firsts in innovation and enterprise. Soon words like Teleview, ISDN (Integrated System Digital Network) and CMRS (Cellular Mobile Radio System) will be as familiar to the public as to Telecoms' forward-looking management.

It is confident of staying profitable while slashing rates across the board and spending more money than ever.

Direct overseas calls and telexes join its domestic subscription rates (unchanged for 14 years) as one of the lowest in the world, thanks to a second round of rate cuts this year.

Businessmen suffering from the economic downturn benefit most from cuts of up to 41 per cent for IDD, 23 per cent for international telexes, 53 per cent for telephone extensions, 52 per cent for pagers and 83 per cent for modems.

Through economies of scale, cost savings mean lower rates for users and a potential loss of \$50m for Telecoms which gamble on offsetting it by the increased use of facilities.

This strategy has succeeded before. Total revenue for 18 months ended 31 March 1984 rose from \$81.249m to \$81.360m despite large cuts in international telephone and telex rates. Traffic rose but the never-satisfied authority called the 9 per cent revenue growth rate a "slowdown."

From its reserves, \$31,000m in fixed deposits and \$310m in

spare cash, it will commit \$83.15bn to make Singapore an international communications centre.

It has managed to give more for less through an astute policy of banking on the future by spending billions on the latest technology. Yet it practically guarantees the Government \$47m in dividends annually.

Thus its optical fibre network stretches across the island, forging the way to better state-of-the-art equipment. The marvellous optic fibre, thin as hair, transmits signals 100 times faster yet save \$83m over the conventional copper cables.

While every conversation requires a pair of copper cables, 300,000 telephone channels need but one optical fibre. And this is only 1 per cent of the fibre's capability.

So services become cheaper as each pair of lines carries different forms of communication.

#### Digital telephone

The possibilities appear endless when the island's 25 exchanges are interconnected by the network, which also provides the basic infrastructure for the "hottest subject today," the fully integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN).

This is an intelligent network that can handle telephone calls, transmission between computers, telex machines, electronic mail and control of electronic equipment.

It provides a digital telephone which can store messages, time calls and actually see the incoming caller's number, which virtually eliminates crank calls.

By buying one of the four existing videotex systems, Telecoms could have reduced the projected \$550m-\$51bn investment in Teleview, an interactive computer-based information network. But it wanted a complex network of facilities which the average man can afford and easily learn to use so it partnered Marconi of Britain to develop its own system.

By the early 1990s, a user

paying \$200 for an adaptor to fit to his television set and telephone will be able to read the news, access the telephone directory, check stocks or weather, order groceries, send messages and operate a personal computer.

While it modestly says that Teleview will complement the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation's teletext system (similar to Britain's Ceefax), its interactive system has greater advantages in giving higher transmission quality, producing pictures, and storing more information, with even faster access.

Meanwhile, the \$670m undersea submarine cable link with Hong Kong and Taiwan this year underlines Singapore's position as the communications hub between the East and West.

Already connected to all ASEAN partners, it will figure in links from Australia to Indonesia and, in its biggest project, from South East Asia to the Middle East to Western Europe.

The 1990s should see an integrated telecommunications network with the United States and the United Kingdom.

So far, it has introduced the \$48m Teletext service to receive and transmit text; facsimile machines; Telex for electronic bulletin boards; and six telephone services such as Abbreviated Dialling, Call Transfer and Call Waiting. It is no longer dependent on a partner to operate the telephone directory and the Yellow Pages.

The millionth telephone installed this year will raise the ratio of 369 telephones per 1,000 people (292 in Hong Kong) to a telephone for every two persons by 1988.

Next will come, with the increasing popularity of mobile phones, alpha numeric pagers with words and figures and portable handheld telephones; facsimile machines to homes and even a means to avoid junk mail.

Telecoms has no pretensions as to its role, but many envisage

a far grander scenario. Take its position as third largest shareholder (8 per cent) in Singapore Press Holdings, the monopoly created by the merger of the two major newspaper groups in 1984.

There are obvious synergies as both organisations are in mass communications. The newspapers' libraries can serve as the data base for Teleview, although the Times Publishing group recently launched its almost similar rival Teleguide service. Whether it will play a bigger role remains to be seen, but its chairman Mr Frank Yang is an SPC board member.

#### Successful

Although a monopoly, Telecoms is mindful of service.

General Manager Goh Seng Kim boasts its public relations philosophy was evaluated the best among government ministries, departments and statutory boards. FR chief Rosa Tham attends board meetings to assess the effect of decisions made.

This may explain the choice of Telecoms together with Singapore Airlines as two of the nation's most successful enterprises.

Such accolades have fuelled inevitable queries about its privatisation. After British Telecom's launch as one of 1985's most successful public issues which the Malaysian counterpart hopes to emulate.

It won't happen in the near future. The Government retains a controlling stake in companies important to the national interest and few organisations can claim more vital control of land, sea and air communications than Telecoms.

The authority will seek a place in the record books with its proposed 189-metre high engineering complex, designed by Kenzo Tange no less, as the world's tallest telecommunications building (London's 198-metre-high Post Office tower is essentially a tower).

With Telecoms reaching out in every conceivable direction, somehow this seems appropriate.

## Strategy is being refined

#### Biotechnology

STEPHANIE YANCHINSKI

"SINGAPORE COULD become a clone of Silicon Valley, and the home of a new biotechnology industry to serve the whole Pacific Basin." So says Dr Vincent Yip, executive director of the Science Council, and head of advanced technology at the Singapore Economic Development Board, who is one of the architects of Singapore's industrial assault on high technology.

Dr Yip says "We don't have the burden of old industry, nor a large agricultural base to support. Our strategic location and international contacts means we are well placed to move fast" into a number of advanced technologies, of which biotechnology is only one.

The government programme for supporting research and development embraces electronic, and biotechnology, with projects ranging from designing software for information systems to breeding rare orchids. The focus, at the moment, is on biotechnology with the first major international conference to be held in Southeast Asia coming up in November, and foreign companies jostling to establish a base in Singapore.

Singapore's fledgling Science Park already boasts commitments from two foreign biotechnology ventures, the American-based Biotechnology Ltd, and the subsidiary of a major Japanese concern, soon to be announced. Two others, Everbloom Mushrooms PTE and Plantek International PTE, a business backed with American money, are already well-established.

#### Venture capital

To encourage others the Government recently announced a \$5100m venture capital fund, earmarked for attracting collaborations with foreign companies in high-tech ventures.

The Government is also pouring money into biotechnology research. Four years ago the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which has taken a lead in supporting biotechnology, set aside \$650m for engineering and biological research through its newly inaugurated Research and Development Assistance Scheme.

To date, one fifth has been committed to biomedical and biotechnological projects. Early this year a new Institute for Molecular and Cell Biology was launched with a budget in excess of \$865m over the next five years.

On top of this, money filters out through other government agencies. The International Trading Company Intraq, a government firm Temasek, and the Development Bank of Singapore combined to underwrite 80 per cent of the \$520m Biotechnology, and build a production plant for manufacturing vaccines against hepatitis.

However, government planners are realistic about what can be achieved in a country as small as Singapore. Dr Yip points out "We must realise that Singapore's small internal market, and limited manpower are constraints on a full thrust on a broad front into biotechnology. The difficulties now confronting Singapore involves nurturing even higher levels of education and expertise."

This means encouraging the brightest students to think of a career in science instead of business through salary incentives, and higher status. He admits that the Mandarin tradition of honoured scholarship fundamental to Chinese society has not yet taken root in Singapore. "But quickly adds that "We are culturally very adaptable."

In view of the limited human and financial resources, the Government says that it seeks niches where Singapore inherently possesses certain advantages, such as tropical plant genetics, Asian food and beverages, and healthcare areas such as liver diseases. It consults a panel of top-flight foreign advisers to assess the value of the most ambitious projects, and help refine its strategy.

However, an expert with a noted consultancy agency in Singapore says "the government programme is still too broad. It may be a good thing at first to cast the net so wide in order to catch the entrepreneurs, but it must be refined rapidly afterwards."

Unfortunately, traditional local industry remains sceptical

about the potential of biotechnology, and the Government still funds the applied research and development normally subsidised by industrial money in other countries.

Mr Wong Mong Hong, the works director of Lam Soon Oil and Soap Manufacturing, whose own company is involved in a large government-sponsored project to upgrade palm oil through biotechnology, says that in Singapore "the philosophy of industry is to look for immediate returns. They are not concerned with supporting R&D for setting markets 20 years from now, which will determine whether they survive or not."

Dr Yip remains optimistic. "We are like Zola Budd—we run well just behind the leaders, but can accelerate fast in the home stretch."

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## INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES &amp; FINANCE

## Apple outlines new strategy

BY LOUISE KEHOE IN SAN FRANCISCO

APPLE COMPUTER is aiming for increased profits despite flat revenue for fiscal 1986, according to Mr. John Sculley, president of the US personal computer manufacturer.

Outlining a series of strategic changes at Apple, Mr. Sculley said the group plans not to increase its revenues but to restructure the mix of revenues so it can be well positioned in the long-term to counter competition.

Apple is planning for around 15 per cent revenue growth in international operations, particularly Europe, and wants to increase the pro-

portion of its sales abroad from 20 per cent to 35 per cent.

"We expect profits to be significantly higher in 1986 than 1985. Things are shaping up for a fine Christmas quarter with orders already in, though revenues will be lower than last year," Mr. Sculley said.

Research and development spending will increase by 50 per cent above fiscal 1985 levels. "This is an extraordinary commitment to the importance we believe new product developments must play in Apple's future."

Apple implemented a radical re-

organisation of its operations this summer. Previously, the company had been arranged in two product divisions which often competed for corporate attention and funds. In the aftermath of the reorganisation, Apple co-founder Mr. Steve Jobs resigned as chairman and has subsequently been sued by Apple for alleged theft of proprietary information.

The crisis created by Mr. Jobs' public quarrels with his former company and by a slowdown in personal computer market growth served to pull together Apple's new structure, said Mr. Sculley.

## Southland rejects Burlington bid

BY OUR FINANCIAL STAFF

SOUTHLAND ROYALTY, the Texas-based oil and gas producer, has rejected the \$730m or \$17 a share offer by Burlington Northern, the US transport group.

It has also sued Burlington Northern, charging violation of the Securities and Exchange Act and is seeking preliminary and permanent "injunctive relief" against the offer.

Southland also disclosed that it approved lucrative "golden parachute" benefits packages for its top

executives in the event of the company being taken over.

Southland has also sweetened its plan to reorganise the business into a limited partnership. Changes in the plan include an increase in the intended distribution per unit from \$2 to \$2.70 a year and a commitment to make the distribution during each of the next three years subject to certain conditions.

Southland also announced that a charge, reflecting the expected abandonment of its undeveloped leases as a result of its proposed re-

organisation into a limited partnership cut third quarter results by \$7.6m, or 18 cents a share, after taxes.

The charge left the group with a third-quarter loss of \$1.1m or 3 cents a share, compared with a profit of \$8.5m or 20 cents a share in the same period last year.

Nine-month profits totalled \$24.6m or 57 cents a share against \$25.9m or 60 cents previously. Revenues totalled \$230.9m against \$245.3m for the nine months.

## FT INTERNATIONAL BOND SERVICE

The list shows the 200 latest international bond issues for which an adequate secondary market exists. The following are closing prices for November 5.

U.S. DOLLAR	Issued	Bid	Offer	Change on day	Yield
STRAIGHTS					
Aust Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Aust Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Belgium 10 1/2 82	250	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Belgium 10 1/2 85	250	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Canada 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Canada 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
France 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
France 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Italy 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Italy 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Japan 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Japan 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Netherlands 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Netherlands 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Spain 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Spain 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Sweden 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Sweden 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Switzerland 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Switzerland 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Other Straights					
Aust Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Aust Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Belgium 10 1/2 82	250	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Belgium 10 1/2 85	250	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Canada 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Canada 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
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France 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
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Switzerland 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63

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France 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
France 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
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Sweden 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
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Switzerland 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Other Straights					
Aust Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Aust Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Belgium 10 1/2 82	250	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Belgium 10 1/2 85	250	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Canada 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Canada 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
France 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
France 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Germany 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Italy 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Italy 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Japan 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Japan 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Netherlands 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Netherlands 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Spain 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
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Sweden 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Sweden 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
Switzerland 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
Switzerland 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
UK 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Govt 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 82	100	98 1/2	99	+ 1/2	10.63
US Corp 10 1/2 85	100	102 1/2	103 1/2	+ 1/2	10.63

CONVERTIBLE	150	100 1/8	0	+ 1	7.29
Sweden National 9 1/2 84	200	104 1/4	0	+ 1	11.29
US Govt 7 1/4 94	100	101	0	+ 1 1/4	7.29
EUROPEAN 8 1/2 82	100	85 1/2	- 1/4	+ 1/4	8.26
Fin 1st 1st Korea 7 1/2 85	100	100 1/8	0	+ 1/4	7.51
Finnish 1st 1st Korea 8 1/2 81	100	100 1/8	0	+ 1/4	7.51
Finland Republic 7 1/2 82	100	100 1/8	0	+ 1/4	7.51
Finland Rep Fin 9 1/2 81	100	102 1/8	0	+ 1	8.54
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Japan Govt 7 1/2 81	100	102 1/8	0	+ 1	8.54
Japanese Govt 7 1/2 81	300	102 1/8	0	+ 1	8.54
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All of these securities having been sold, this announcement appears as a matter of record only.



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October, 1985





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October 1985

## INTL. COMPANIES & FINANCE

### Japanese shipbuilder in plans to cut workforce

BY TOKO SHIBATA IN TOKYO

HITACHI ZOSEN, the large Japanese shipbuilder, has announced plans to shed 5,000 jobs and close the new vessels yard at its Hiroshima site. The job cuts, to be effected by March 1987, will account for some 30 per cent of the total workforce. The withdrawal from shipbuilding at Hiroshima is due to be completed by the end of 1987, the company will concentrate these activities at its Ariake works in Kyushu. Workforce reductions are to be brought about through the lowering of the retirement age to 58 from the current 60 and the transfer of some workers to newly established subsidiaries.

Japanese shipbuilders are facing the evaporation of their order backlog within two years. Of the industry's rationalisation efforts, those planned by Hitachi Zosen are the most drastic. This reflects the high proportion of shipbuilding in its overall business, accounting for about 34 per cent of turnover compared with only 15 per cent for Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the largest. Ishikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries (IH) has also announced plans to reduce its workforce, by 2,000 through transfers to other departments or group companies. IH has a total workforce of slightly over

26,000, of which 8,000 are in the shipbuilding division where the cuts will be centred. The company is also to cancel the planned extension of its mandatory retirement age from 58 to 60. At the same time, IH announced yesterday that parent company pre-tax profits dipped 5.06 per cent to ¥8.84bn in the six months to September. Sales were 5.3 per cent lower at ¥88.5bn, and net earnings emerged at ¥4.04bn or ¥3.10 per share, against ¥4.70bn or ¥3.61 a share. It maintained the interim dividend, however, at ¥3 per share.

### First-half loss for Nippon Oil

BY OUR TOKYO STAFF

NIPPON OIL, Japan's largest primary oil distributor and refiner, suffered a pre-tax loss of ¥7.23bn (\$34.5m) in the first half of 1985-86.

Earnings deteriorated despite stable crude oil prices in dollar terms, helped by a reduction in oil output by the Opec countries and hefty foreign exchange gains accrued on oil imports following the steep appreciation of the yen.

There was a net loss of ¥6.08bn, against profits of

¥3.95bn. Half-year turnover was ¥1,373.6bn, down by 3.6 per cent.

The fall in earnings was blamed on a fall in demand for fuel oil from electric power companies as nuclear power stations came on stream, and slack market prices for petrol and other products. Efforts to firm up petrol wholesale prices were undermined by fierce competition of retail outlets.

For the second half to March 1986, Nippon Oil intends to raise product prices by ¥7,000 per kilolitre and expects ex-

change profits of ¥16bn on the premise stand at ¥215 on average.

The company projects oil sales excluding joint sales with Mitsubishi Oil at 39m kilolitres for the year as a whole down 5.4 per cent from the previous year. It is aiming for full-year pre-tax profits of ¥15bn, up 3 per cent, and net profits of ¥8bn, down 17 per cent on sales of ¥2,900bn, down 6 per cent.

The dividend total will be maintained at ¥6 per share, including an interim payment of ¥3.

### Japan relaxes Samurai bond restrictions

By Carla Rapoport in Tokyo

JAPAN'S Ministry of Finance (MoF) has cleared the way for increasing the volume of yen-denominated foreign bonds, or Samurai bonds, in Japan.

The MoF has approved dual-currency Samurai bonds, raised the ceiling on issue amounts and increased the number of eligible bond-rating services from three to five.

Further, the MoF says it plans to allow floating-rate note Samurais, zero-coupon bonds and corporate bonds with warrants in the Samurai market. MoF officials said yesterday the new bonds would amount to foreign exchange hedges for the issuers and allow them to procure cash at less cost than in Eurobond issues, because of swapping deals.

For the investor, the new Samurais would offer higher interest rates than straight yen bonds. Companies with triple A ratings will have no ceiling placed on issue volume, while that for companies with double A ratings will be increased from ¥30bn to ¥40bn.

### Price rises boost interim sales and profits at Telco

BY R. C. MURPHY IN BOMBAY

TATA ENGINEERING and Locomotive Company (Telco), India's largest producer of commercial vehicles, achieved a 9.8 per cent increase in sales to Rs 3,77bn (\$308.7m) in the half-year to September, while pre-tax profits rose 12.2 per cent to Rs 115.0m, reflecting price increases effected early this year.

The company produced 22,903 vehicles, up by 13.5 per cent over the same six months last year. The value of exports was down two-thirds to Rs 136.0m, but Telco hopes to lift exports to Rs 600m by the end of the current year.

Mr S. Moogapakar, chairman, says the overall performance of the company during 1985-86 is expected to be better than in the previous year. Telco's product range has been widened with the recent introduction of hydraulic excavators with Japanese collaboration.

Associated Cement Companies, India's largest cement producer, has proposed a one-for-five scrip issue, disappointing its shareholders and stock-

brokers who had expected a more generous distribution.

An issue of this nature was proposed originally in September last year but was stalled by the Industrial Development Bank of India (Idbi), a government-owned financial institution.

Its prior permission was necessary because of loans which had been granted by Idbi for expansion and modernisation.

The proposal was opposed on the grounds that the company's projected earnings would not be able to service the increased equity base, but the present plan has the tacit approval of Idbi.

On the expectation of a three-for-five bonus issue, shares in the company had soared on the Bombay Stock Exchange before falling back last week.

Sales rose by 14 per cent to Rs 7,05bn in the year to July, but pre-tax profits were down to Rs 134.2m from Rs 212.0m and net earnings were Rs 134.2m against Rs 212.0m.

### Southern Sun hit by higher interest bill

By Jim Jones in Johannesburg

SOUTHERN SUN, South Africa's dominant hotel chain, fell into a pre-tax loss in the half-year to September and has passed its interim dividend. Its room occupancy rate fell to 58 per cent from 62 per cent.

After a substantially higher interest bill, the pre-tax deficit was R1.6m (\$21,000) against last year's R10m interim profit. Mr Meyer Kahn, the chairman, attributes the higher interest bill to the April acquisition of the country's Holiday Inn chain. That acquisition made Southern Sun the largest South African hotel group.

After tax allowances, first-half earnings fell to 1.5 cents a share from 20.5 cents. Last year's interim dividend was 14 cents.

Mr Kahn expects seasonal factors to enhance second-half earnings but does not believe that this year's profits will match last year's. He says that forecasting is extremely difficult in the present uncertain economic environment.

Southern Sun is controlled by South African Breweries. Plascon-Evans (Plevans), South Africa's largest paint maker, suffered from lower sales volumes and substantially higher raw materials costs in the year to September 30.

Although turnover rose by 5.8 per cent to R263.6m, pre-tax profits were almost halved to R15.7m from R30.7m.

Sales were badly affected by low levels of activity in the building and automotive industries, and the directors say that the weakening rand led not only to higher raw materials costs but also to higher interest charges on debt raised to finance more expensive inventories.

Earnings fell to 33.5 cents a share from 62.5 cents and the dividend has been cut to 15 cents from 28 cents.

Romatex, one of South Africa's leading textiles manufacturers, says unrest and the state of emergency have added trading difficulties. In the year to September, turnover declined by 5.6 per cent to R455m while pre-tax profits dropped by more than two-thirds to R11.4m from R36.2m.

The directors say trading declined until February and the stability between March and June was ended by the effects of the unrest. They are pessimistic on immediate prospects, saying that the socio-political climate is unlikely to improve or consumer confidence recover.

Earnings per share fell to 39.0 cents from 95.5 cents and the year's dividend has been cut to 15 cents from 40 cents.

Romatex and Plevans are both controlled by the Barlow Rand industrial and mining group.

New Issue

November 1985

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69 Old Broad Street,  
London, EC2P 2EE

6th November, 1985

## INTL. COMPANIES & FINANCE

# GMF Robotics takes the lead in a fast growing industry

BY IAN RODGER

FEW COMPANIES have become the largest in their field only two years after going into business. But that is the achievement of GMF Robotics in the fast-growing robotics industry.

GMF began trading in June, 1983 and achieved sales of \$16m in that year. Last year, sales reached \$102.8m, more than double those of Cincinnati Milacron, number two in the US. Moreover, GMF is almost unique among robot makers in being profitable.

This year, revenues will be close to \$200m, which GMF believes will put it comfortably ahead of Asea of Sweden, the European leader. Asea's industrial equipment division, of which robots form a substantial part, had sales of SKr 3.5bn (\$422m) last year. Asea sold nearly 1,500 robots in 1984 compared with GMF's 1,208.

Of course GMF, which is based in a suburb of Detroit has a couple of advantages. One of its parents is General Motors, the largest user of robots in the US. The other is Fujitsu Fancu, the leading Japanese electrical goods and robot maker.

"We chose our parents well," says Mr Eric Mittelstadt, president of GMF, with a smile. As he tells it, the creation of GMF arose from GM's previous unhappy experiences with buying robots from outside suppliers and the knowledge that it would probably want to install about 20,000 robots in its factories by the end of the 1990s.

For its part, Fancu was getting nowhere in efforts to sell robots in the US through its General Numeric joint venture with Siemens of West Germany. Numeric was set up mainly to distribute Fancu numerical controls for machine tools in the US and had no direct contacts with end users or application engineers.

The idea behind the joint venture was that Fancu would provide low-cost hardware, while GM would put in its Flexible Automation Systems (FAS) unit, a group of 60 people that had been working within the group on developing robot systems for several years. It looked like a winning combination, yet GMF was coming into a sector that has been hard going for many companies. Cincinnati, for example, has made profits on its well-established robot business in only one of the past 11 years.

In the event, the venture has been extremely successful. Competitors complain that GMF has an unfair advantage when dealing with GM as a customer, and it is true that more than half its turnover comes from GM. But Mr Mittelstadt, a 49-year-old GM careerman who has been president of GMF from the outset, denies that there is any preference. "We have the motivation of the huge GM market but we do not have a lock on it. All we can do is bid."

He also points out that GMF

for the venture's success has been its inheritance from GM of a numerically controlled system for continuous painting of cars and trucks. When FAS became part of GMF, it was installing the first production model at a GM plant in Atlanta. The system proved effective and has since become popular in the automotive industry. GMF expects to deliver 200 of them this year to various automotive companies, including BMW and Daimler Benz in West Germany. Vehicle painting systems now

if there is any special reason for this, Mr Mittelstadt is not revealing it. "We get people who are excited about the business, and give them an opportunity to do what they do best. The average age here is just over 30."

Today, GMF gets about 45 per cent of its revenue from sales of spot welding robots, mainly to the automotive industry. Another 25 per cent comes from vehicle painting systems. The rest of its sales are for materials handling and assembly applications. For the moment, the company's strategy for the future is to remain a full-line robotics company, but that could change. Although the robotics industry is still relatively young, there has already been a significant shakeout, and most analysts believe only a few companies will be able to keep up with technological developments in more than one specialised sector.

Among GMF's recent technical developments are a program named language for robots, named Karel after the Czech pioneer in robotics, and an assembly robot that meets clean room standards for use in the electronics industry. The company is also a leader in applying vision systems to robots. Earlier this year, for example, it signed an agreement with Meta Machines of Oxford for the development of an arc welding robot that combines Meta's laser-based vision system for tracking weld seams with GMF's robots.

Until now, GMF has concentrated mainly on markets in the US. Its original agreement with Fancu gave it sales rights for Fancu equipment in North America, South America, Australia, New Zealand and in GM factories throughout the world. Since then, it has gained non-exclusive marketing rights in most European countries with the exception of the UK, where the 600 Group has a licence to market Fancu robots, and it has opened an office in Düsseldorf.

It remains to be seen whether GMF can maintain the remarkable momentum of its first three years. Mr Mittelstadt seems confident, but he also acknowledges that there are tough battles ahead. "Several of the Japanese companies are formidable competitors. And there are others, such as IBM and General Electric, that have the potential."

Mr Mittelstadt believes the main reason for GMF's strong start is its IBM-like commitment to customers. "Our credo is total customer support"



is the industry leader, not only in the automotive sector, but also in non-automotive markets for robots. Three-quarters of its 400 customers to date are outside the automotive industry. "GM wanted us to be a leader in areas outside the automotive industry. That way, they will know we are competitive."

Some critics also claim that GMF is living largely on low-cost robots imported from Japan, and it is true that the high value of the dollar in the past three years has made Fancu's robots, numerical controls and electrical drives even more competitive than they already were. But Mittelstadt says that 60 per cent of the venture's added value is put on in the US, in the form of system design, software and peripheral equipment. Robots themselves often account for only 15 to 20 per cent of the value of the systems GMF sells.

Another, less noticed reason:

account for about a quarter of GMF's revenues.

But whatever the importance of these factors, it remains a considerable achievement to have managed a fledgling business successfully. Last year, the company made its first profit, said to be between \$2m and \$3m, and another modest profit is expected this year.

Mr Mittelstadt believes the main reason for GMF's strong start is its IBM-like commitment to customers. "Our credo is total customer support. It includes application engineering, documentation, training, installation support, service and parts. That has been the key because what this business is about is trying to reduce the risks for people in going into new technology."

Somewhat, GMF has been able to achieve this without sacrificing productivity. The venture's output is about \$50,000 for each of its 550 employees. But



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Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for the Debentures constituting the issue to be admitted to the Official List. Interest is payable annually in arrears on 3rd December in each year. The first interest payment date will be 3rd December, 1986.

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6th November 1985

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## New Zealand Dairy Board

£100,000,000

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arranged by

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Tender Panel Agent

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## UK COMPANY NEWS

## Sainsbury exceeds City forecasts

BY LISA WOOD

SHARES OF J. Sainsbury, the food and homeware group, reached a high for 1985 yesterday with the group reporting a 23 per cent interim profits increase.

At £24.4m pre-tax for the 28 weeks to October 5 1985, compared with £17.5m, the group exceeded already high City expectations. The interim dividend is being increased by nearly 18 per cent from 1.4p to 1.65p.

Last night's closing share price was 364½, up 6p, after touching 372½ earlier in the day. The previous highest price this year was 358p.

J. Sainsbury, with its 274 food stores, 26 Homebase DIY centres and majority stake in six Sava-Centres, is Britain's biggest food and drinks supermarket chain and increased its volume share of national business this year to 9 per cent of the area of 127,000 compared with 8.6 per cent last year.

Sir John Sainsbury, the chairman, said: "The trading performance is better than expected. The second half has started well and food price inflation will be lower than in the first half."

The results reflect Sainsbury's continuing aggressive food store opening programme, with five

new supermarkets opening in the first half. Of total group sales of £1,730m show an increase of 13.3 per cent. Supermarket volume growth exceeded 9 per cent, of which 3 to 4 per cent was from supermarkets open for two years.

Retail profits increased by 18.7 per cent and the net margin percentage was 4.65—a record level for the first half. The company said: "Our prices have remained highly competitive and we have made further gains in productivity as well as providing better customer service at the check-outs."

Improved productivity has in part come with increased store size which now averages 27,000 sq ft in new stores compared with 20,000 sq ft six years ago. The five supermarkets opened this financial year give a net increase in floor area of 127,000 sq ft. The Guildford store's sales volume set a company record for its opening week.

Seven of the 10 stores to open in the second half will be trading before Christmas. This year's investment programme will exceed in real terms last year's £246m.

The Homebase DIY stores—



Sir John Sainsbury, chairman

two more are opening before Christmas bringing the total to 28—increased sales by 45 per cent to £48.6m. Despite high development costs profit increased from £0.3m to £1.6m. Sainsbury's which has supported liberalisation of Sunday trading laws for such centres, will

undoubtedly benefit if the Government relaxes restrictions on Sunday trading.

The three principal associates performed well and contributed more than double pre-tax profits of £7.2m pre-tax. The six Sava-Centres which are effectively hypermarkets selling Sainsbury foods, DIY goods and textiles also came from the group.

The latter coming from the centres joint owner, British Home Stores, increased profits by 48 per cent. Sainsbury's said that Sava-Centres, another associate, was once again showing good profits after trading problems last year mainly because of high pig prices.

Sainsbury's North American associate Shaw's, a private food retailer, achieved excellent results.

The 1984-85 distribution under the group's profit sharing scheme resulted in more than 15m shares being awarded to over 11,000 employees who choose to take all or part of their distribution in shares rather than cash.

Nevertheless, no provision for profit sharing had been made in the half year since the level of profit share was dependent on the full year's results.

See Lex

## Electrocomponents' 26% midterm surge

A NEAR 26 per cent advance in first half taxable profits, from £12.75m to £16.03m, is reported by the Electrocomponents group. But that growth rate is unlikely to be maintained in the immediate future.

Market conditions have become increasingly competitive, the directors point out. However, they are confident of continued progress for the rest of the current year and beyond.

Earnings have moved up from 6.86p to 8.57p per share, and the interim dividend is raised from 1.6p to 1.9p net. For the full year ended March 31 1985, the group made a pre-tax profit of £29.6m and paid a total dividend of £3.8p.

In the half-year ended September 30 1985, all the subsidiaries, principal activities are the distribution of electrical components and the leasing and sale of computer equipment. Software—achieved sales revenue growth and each contributed to profit. Turnover increased by

21.5 per cent, from £73.67m to £89.54m.

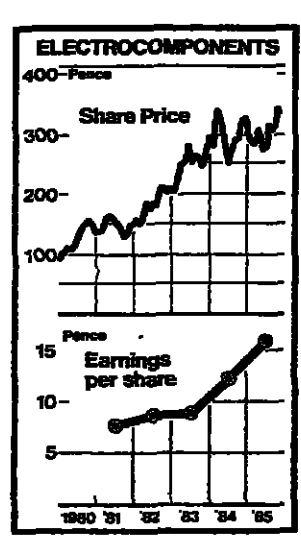
Electrocomponents achieved efficiency gains from consolidation within its new Weldon facility.

At September 30, the group's net bank balances stood at £9.5m, compared with £4.2m a year earlier.

On October 1, Electrocomponents set up two new US subsidiaries—S & S Electronics and Lowell Systems based in Boston—to acquire assets from two existing businesses at a cost of \$5.6m. Existing management remains and the investment will be financed by a medium-term bank loan.

S & S is engaged in the distribution of computer peripheral equipment in New England, New Jersey and New York. Lowell supplies bar code labelling and tracking systems from offices in New England, New Jersey, Chicago and Toledo.

The half-year's profit included interest received of £743,000 (£568,000). Tax takes £5.4m



(£5.72m) and minorities £71,000 (£47,000), to leave the available profit at £9.55m (£9.99m).

## comment

Electrocomponents has done it again—announced better than expected figures but superceded them with a cautious statement about the future. The shares fell 12p to 333p after the news having outperformed the market by 10 per cent over the past month. Nevertheless, despite the customary caution, Electrocomponents should still make £55m to £58m pre-tax this year with perhaps £10m to £12m in the interim period pre-interest margins improved by a half point, thanks to the new Weldon facility which did not really start humming until April. Further margin improvements are possible and even though competitive pressures have emerged in recent weeks, price is not a serious problem. And p/e of 18, assuming a 40 per cent tax charge, is not expensive for a company that has recently averaged 18 per cent profits growth even if that drops to under 20 per cent in the next few years.

## Rosehaugh behind but assets expand

TAKING INTO account much heavier administration costs and interest charges, the investment holding and property development group Rosehaugh has turned in lower profits for the year ended June 30 1985.

At the pre-tax level they are down from £3.4m to £2.7m and earnings per £1 share have fallen from 1.8p to 2.25p. The dividend, however, is stepped up to 3.82p net (3.36p).

Mr Geoffrey Bradman, the chairman, says the year has begun to reflect the rewards of the pursuit of asset growth over recent years. Net assets attributable to shareholders at June 30 had surged from £18.85m to £31.35m, with fixed assets investments standing at £28.97m (£1.9m).

The increase reflects the valuations, for the first time, of

1 Finsbury Ave, EC, and 120 Church Street, New York, and the interests in Woolworth Holdings, but the latter has since been sold realising net proceeds of £20m.

Mr Bradman says Finsbury represents the completed and fully let first phase of a development of 500,000 sq ft gross of offices, to be completed in three phases.

Progress continues to be made by the principal trading subsidiaries which have recently made several purchases of development sites and other properties for their medium term programmes.

Plans are in hand to give the group entire ownership of the 149 acres of land at Whiteley, Hampshire, held by Craftsmooth. This company is 50 per

cent owned by Rosehaugh and 50 per cent by London Mercantile Holdings, the whole of which is currently owned by a number of Mr Bradman's family trusts.

Good progress has been made towards obtaining planning consent for residential development at Whiteley. The land has been independently valued at £5.5m and were planning permission now available it would be worth some £12.5m.

LME also owns 70,096 shares in Rosehaugh representing 9.2 per cent of the capital, and other net assets with a value of £88,000.

Consideration for the acquisition of the balance of LME will be the issue of 720,000 convertible deferred £1 shares in respect of the holding in Craftsmooth, and the allotment of

670,000 ordinary £1 shares in the case of Rosehaugh shares held by LME and the other net assets.

The convertible shares will not be listed but will be convertible at the holders' option into Rosehaugh ordinary not later than December 31 1990 by reference to 50 per cent of the net asset value of Craftsmooth at the date of conversion.

With a view to improving the marketability of the Rosehaugh shares, the directors propose they should be subdivided into 20p.

In the year ended June 30 the group made a gross profit of £5.56m (£5.71m) from a turnover of £27.22m (£26.43m). Other income came to £1.22m (£58,000). Administrative costs £2.23m (£1.7m) and interest payable £2.84m (£1.4m).

## Land Securities raises £100m

By Michael Cassell, Property Correspondent

Land Securities, the UK's largest property group, has arranged a £100m mortgage debenture issue to fund the next phase of its investment and development programme.

The issue, of first mortgage debenture stock dated 2025 at £22.50 per cent, was placed yesterday by Schroders. The price is payable at £23 per cent on acceptance and the balance by January 31 1986. Gross redemption yield at issue is 10.781 per cent and the stock carries a coupon of 10 per cent. Dealings are expected to start tomorrow.

Land Securities has a UK portfolio valued at over £21m and has recently announced a series of property acquisitions and development proposals designed to maintain its investment programme and asset growth.

The group, which has over two-thirds of its property assets within the Greater London area, plans continuing improvements within its existing portfolio but is also embarking on a fresh phase of new projects.

It has recently acquired two office buildings in London's Fleet Street, plans a major redevelopment in Trafalgar Square and has submitted a planning application to build a 221,000 sq ft office scheme on the former general post office site near St Paul's Cathedral. The group is also stepping up its involvement in the development of retail warehousing.

Mr Peter Hunt, managing director of Land Securities, said that the group had recently committed itself to a large number of new schemes, together with some which had not yet been decided. He said much of the £100m raised had already been earmarked for new projects.

He added: "We felt this was the right time to raise the money, on reasonably favourable terms. We have been able to secure a lower charge than would be possible for the rest of the property sector."

## Bishopsgate Insurance changes hands

The major Dutch insurance group, ANEV, is acquiring Bishopsgate Insurance, a UK-based non-life insurance company, from its present owners, the Worms Group, a French company, a Bain Davies group, the UK insurance broking group.

ANEV is putting up a total capital commitment of between £12m and £13m, which comprises the acquisition costs and an increase in Bishopsgate's capital base.

The acquisition marks a further stage in ANEV's planned development of its UK interests. It already has a strong involvement in the UK life market in both the traditional sector, through

Graham Life Assurance Society and the unit-linked through Graham Unit Assurance, and is expanding into the UK unit trust market with the formation of Graham Unit Trust Managers.

Bishopsgate is a general insurance company based in Southampton with particular emphasis on motor, travel and marine insurance. It employs 250 people and its gross premium income in 1984 amounted to £65.4m.

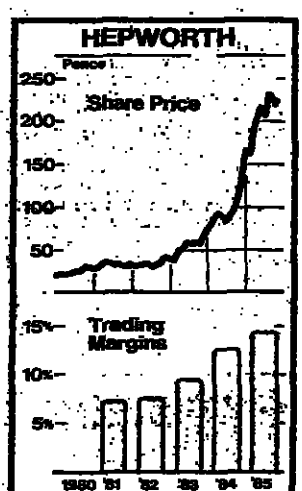
## Hepworth at £20m and changing name to Next

CONTINUING success of the Next chain has not only brought financial rewards to J. Hepworth & Son but is prompting the directors to propose using that name for the group's title.

With their announcement of the preliminary results for the year ended August 31 1985, showing pre-tax profits rising from £18.8m to £20.9m, they say because of the growing awareness in the minds of the public/City and the media of the name Next, they are asking shareholders to approve the use of that title for the group.

In the year, Next menswear had an excellent 12 months and the success of Next for Men has meant rapid expansion, the chairman, Mr Michael Stoddard, reports. Both sides of the increased contribution to an advance in retail profits.

The £20.9m profit was at the top end of City expectations. Shareholders receive a final dividend of 2.75p, giving them 3.75p net for the year compared with 2.50p adjusted for last year's two-for-one share split. Turnover advanced by 34.3 per cent, from £108.33m to £144.05m, and the trading profit before interest and tax rose almost



52 per cent, from £18.66m to £20.75m. To this, retailing contributed £11.89m (£8.58m), manufacturing £8.86m (£434,000), property £3.11m (£304m) and share of non-consolidated subsidiary £4.74m (£4.48m).

Next Interiors, the home furnishing range, was launched successfully in August. During the year the "complete store" strategy has been developed, says Mr Stoddard, with womenswear, menswear, shoes and accessories, interiors, cafe and florist all trading alongside each other. "We will continue to expand this successful concept," he says.

Retail rationalisation costs, including the creation of Next Interiors chain, were offset against the surplus on property disposals in excess of last year's revaluation, leaving an extraordinary profit below the line of £2.15m (£461,000).

Net profit came to £11.79m (£8.15m) after tax of £2.77m (£5.83m), giving earnings of 8.73p (£6.89p) per share.

With effect from September the group exercised its option to acquire the minority interest of 49.9 per cent in Club 24, the non-consolidated finance subsidiary, from Forward Trust. It agreed to acquire Lord John and Ward Brothers from Raybeck at a cost of some £11.5m to be met by vendor placing of ordinary shares. The businesses are engaged in retailing ladieswear and menswear from some 104 outlets.

See Lex

## Gomme returns to dividend list

AS FORESHADOWED in May, Gomme Holdings, the maker of G-Plan furniture, is returning to the dividend list after a four-year absence. Following an increase in 1984-85 pre-tax profits from a restated £15.5m to £17.2m, the company has declared a single dividend of 2p net.

The directors report that compared with the poor start in 1984-85, there has been a marked improvement in demand. The company started the current year with a very satisfactory order book which ensures that the factories are working to capacity. The full year result, reflected in the interim dividend, is the first following the downturn in interim profits to £732,000 (£554,000). Last year's pre-tax profit had been restated with £180,000 as a result of the adoption of SSAP 21 or capitalisation of finance leases.

Turnover for the 12 months to July 26, 1985, increased from £24.4m to £25.7m. The charge was higher at £140,000 (£130,000) giving an attributable surplus up

slightly at £1.58m, against £1.52m. Last year, there was also an extraordinary debit of £30,000.

Borrowings fell from £10.5m to £11.5m in the year. Available tax losses of nearly £4m will mean profits earned will continue to be reflected in reduced borrowings, the directors state.

The company's freehold and long leasehold property, including a property bought during the year for £16,500, was professionally valued on an open market basis at £4m at July 26, 1985. This figure has been incorporated in the accounts and the excess over the net book value on the same date of £1.6m has been transferred to a revaluation reserve.

Gomme Holdings' shares bounced up 5p to 57p, the highest level for a very long time, thanks to a strong second half profit improvement. The market has been further buoyed because almost none of this growth came

from the controversial clawback on the company's overfunded pension scheme. For future years—possibly the end of the century—the effect of the recent Inland Revenue decree is that Gomme need contribute nothing to pensions. Each year this should save around £150,000 on costs. In addition the rest of this decade could well be tax-free thanks to accumulated losses.

Under such circumstances, and with earnings down from 48 per cent to 31 per cent, the return to paying a dividend after five years seems only just for the patient shareholders. The coming year promises to be the best since the halcyon days of 1976-77 in spite of the doldrums in the furniture trade and £2.1m pre-tax should be possible. This forecast puts the shares on a modest prospective multiple of 4. Given a nominal 10 per cent tax charge, with a market capitalisation of only £7.4m, the company could be interesting to someone attracted by 15 per cent and pension plans.

## TMD valued at £6.33m

By Michael Tomkins

TMD Advertising, a London company which buys advertising time and space in the media for its clients, is to become the first unit-linked securities market.

Brokers Phillips & Drew are placing 1.1m shares in the company at 118p per share, giving it a market capitalisation of £6.33m.

TMD's business is to plan and buy advertising media on behalf of its clients with the aim of delivering the advertised message cost-effectively to the maximum number of potential customers.

It started in 1972 as a subsidiary of Kimpher, the holding company for a number of advertising interests. Initially it provided services for its own clients and, for advertising agencies in the Kimpher group.

Mr David Reich, now chairman, was a co-founder of the business and became managing director in 1976. The directors acquired a 49 per cent interest in the company in 1978 and the remainder in 1982. In 1983 it was acquired by 10th biggest purchaser of media space last year and says it is Britain's largest media specialist company.

Its customers include Rothmans (UK), Beecham, Cosmetics, British Olivetti, Habitat and Burton.

The placing will raise £1.3m of new money for the company. The rest will go to the directors and their families. Turnover in the year to August 31 was £24.7m against £23.2m and the pre-tax profit was £504,000 against £302,000. The company has declined to make a profit forecast because only two months of its year have passed. The historic p/e ratio is 21.4 after a tax charge of 45 per cent.

## Ronald Martin placing on USM

Ronald Martin Group, an office equipment, furniture and stationery supplier, is coming to the United Securities Market via a placing by brokers Panmure Gordon & Co. £2.5m shares at 90p each, giving a market capitalisation of £6.8m.

The placing will raise about £2.1m. This, £288,000 net will be used to acquire the company and the rest will go to shareholders—principally Mr Martin, the chairman, and Mr Nigel Gordon, the managing director, and their families.

The group, based in Manchester, was formed in 1972 by Mr Martin and his wife Karen. Mr Gordon joined in 1976, initially as financial controller.

The group says the purpose of the placing is to provide additional working capital to finance further expansion organically and through acquisition.

Turnover in the year to last December was £8.1m, against £7.4m, and the pre-tax profit, after directors' additional emoluments of £215,000, was £285,000 (£174,000 after emoluments of £110,000).

The group forecasts a pre-tax profit of £250,000 for the current year, putting it on a prospective p/e ratio of 12.2 after a tax charge of 41 per cent.

Men and Matters, Page 22

Granville & Co. Limited									
Member of The National Association of Security Dealers and Investment Managers									
8 Lovat Lane London EC3A 8BP Telephone 01-421 1212									
Over-the-Counter Market									
High	Low	Ass.	Company	Ord.	Price	Change	Gross Yield	% Actual	Fully
145	123	Ass.	Brit. Ind. CULS	137	—	10.0	7.3	—	8.7
77	43	Ass.	Arking Group	109	—	8.4	10.8	9.8	12.9
48	28	Ass.	Armstrong and Rhoads	165	—	4.0	2.4	20.9	21.7
163	108	Ass.	Bardon Hill	151	—	12.0	7.9	8.7	3.8
84	42	Ass.	Bry Technology	103	—	15.7	15.2	8.2	8.7
135	101	Ass.	CCCL	103	—	10.7	11.5	—	—
152	103	Ass.	CCCL 11pc Conv. Pl.	93	—	7.0	13.0	5.6	7.4
130	80	Ass.	Carborundum 7.5pc Pl.	83	—	—	—	—	—
73	46	Ass.	Deborah Services	54	—	—	—	—	—
32	21	Ass.	Fredrick Parker	77	—	—	—	—	—
80	30	Ass.	Geo. Blair	46	—	—	—	—	—
218	177	Ass.	Ind. Precision Castings	105	—	15.0	8.1	11.9	9.8
124	101	Ass.	Jackson Group	105	—	5.5	5.2	7.1	7.1
285	217	Ass.	James Burroughs	96	—	12.9	13.6	8.5	8.5
85	53	Ass.	James Burroughs 96pc	36	—	10.0	5.6	6.1	8.6
95	71	Ass.	John Howard and Co.	77	—	1.0	6.6	6.1	8.6
225	100	Ass.	Linguaphone Ord.	90	—	15.0	16.7	—	—
100	50	Ass.	Linguaphone 10.5pc Pl.	50	—	8.3	1.2	26.8	27.7
123	31	Ass.	Robert Jenkins	16	—	—	—	—	—
90	28	Ass.	Scutrons "A"	31	—	5.0	7.3	3.4	3.2
92	61	Ass.	Torrey and Carlisle	325	—	5.4	1.3	16.5	16.2
444	220	Ass.	Treva Holdings	115	—	2.1	6.0	9.5	9.3
35	17	Ass.	Unitech Holdings	115	—	1.7	8.7	5.7	9.8
247	195	Ass.	W. S. Yates	200	—	17.4	8.7	5.7	9.8

## The Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc

£200,000,000

Floating Rate Notes 2005  
of which £100,000,000 has been issued as the Initial Tranche

In accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the interest period from 4th November, 1985 to 4th February, 1986, the Notes will bear a rate of interest of 11½% per annum. The amount of interest payable on 4th February, 1986 will be £148.08 per £5,000 Note, and £1,480.82 per £50,000 Note.

Agent Bank

CHARTERHOUSE  
JAPHET

A member of The Royal Bank of Scotland Group

## DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

**DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED**

	Current payment	Date of payment	Corre- sponding div.	Total for year	Total last year
Bradford Property	int. 4.5	—	3.25	—	0.75
Brkat	2.5	Jan 13	0.75	4	8.5
Electrocomponents	int. 1.8	Jan 2	1.6	—	3.25
Gomme Holdings	2	Dec 31	Nil	2	Nil
J. Hepworth	2.75	Jan 2	1.83*	3.75	2.58*
Rosehaugh	3.92	Dec 9	3.36	3.92	3.36
J. Sainsbury	int. 1.65	Jan 17	1.4	—	4.5
Tay Homes	3.1pt	—	3.1p	4.5p	4.5p
W. A. Tyack	1.1	—	1	1.7	1.5
UDO Holdings	2.52	Dec 19	—	3.75	—
Whitebread Invest	int. 2.37	Jan 10	2.17	—	6.73

Dividends shown pence per share except where otherwise stated.

\* Equivalent after allowing for scrip issues. † On capital increased by rights and/or acquisition issues. ‡ USM stock.

§ Unquoted stock.



## UK COMPANY NEWS

## Britannia launches counter-offensive

Britannia Arrow, the banking and investment group, yesterday launched its counter-offensive against the £212m takeover bid announced last week by Guinness Peat, the financial services company.

In a statement, Mr Geoffrey Rippon, the chairman, denounced GP's offer as "misleading" in several respects, and he told shareholders it was "wholly inadequate".

He said that GP's calculation of the 40 per cent premium it was paying was "meaningless", and the claimed exit multiple of 22.6 times earnings failed to take account of either Britannia's sharp profits increase this year, or its extraordinary items.

GP's comment that its bid gave an increase of 30 per cent in dividend income was also misleading because it ignored the implication of Britannia's profit growth.

Mr Rippon said he could not give a dividend forecast, but he pointed out that Britannia's payout had risen from 1p a share in 1980 to 2.5p in 1984.

In response to GP's claim that the two groups would fit well together, Mr Rippon said: "To some extent our businesses are competitive rather than complementary. That raises serious difficulties. It does not fit as well as they suggest."

The argument was not just about price, and it would also be in GP's shareholders' interests for the two groups to remain independent.

However GP warned Britannia shareholders in its offer document circulated yesterday against expecting an improved offer. It said "Our offer has been described as a 'sighting shot'—this may prove to be an unwelcome assumption."

GP, which is offering 142.5p a share, pointed out that the Britannia share price was 64p just over a year ago. Only three weeks before its offer it was able to buy 5 per cent of Britannia's stock for 101p per share.

"Six months, three months, two months and three weeks before we announced our offer Britannia shares could be bought for around 100p. We are offering a bid premium of more than 40 per cent over that level."

In response to Mr Rippon's comments, a GP spokesman said that the calculations had been made on Britannia's historic figures because the group had not produced either a dividend or a profit forecast. The commercial logic of the bid had also been implicitly accepted by GP's shareholders when they approved its acquisition of 25 per cent of Britannia's shares last January.

Britannia's shares price eased by 3p yesterday to close at 140p as expectations of a counter-bid began to fade. Guinness Peat's share price fell by 1p to 77p.

Acceptances must be in by 3 pm on November 25.

## Chester Waterworks in offer by tender

Chester Waterworks Company yesterday announced the offer for sale by tender of £1.5m of 8 per cent redeemable preference stock 1982.

The issue, which is underwritten by brokers Seymour, Pierce & Co, offers a conventional gross yield of 11.42 per cent at the minimum tender price of £100.

The fully grossed up franked dividend income field of 12.44 per cent compares with 11.44 per cent and 10.74 redemption on Exchequer 12½ per cent 1982, which is the closest equivalent gilt-edged issue.

Chester Waterworks Company was incorporated in 1826 and supplies water to a population of about 114,000 over 132 sq km of Cheshire and Clwyd, under an agreement with the Welsh Water Authority. At December 31 it had net assets of £5.1m.

The purpose of the issue is to raise funds towards the redemption of £2m of 8 per cent redeemable preference stock 1985 at the end of next month.

The offer closes at 11 am on November 13. A deposit of £10 per £100 nominal must accompany each tender and the balance is to be paid on or before December 12.

The last waterworks issue was by Eastbourne Waterworks Company which offered £2.75m of 8½ per cent redeemable preference stock 1985.

**Comment**

Chester Waterworks' offer carries with it the prospect of an attractive yield in conventional terms. On a franked investment income yield basis it looks still more tempting and among stocks redeemable in seven years, there is nothing to beat it. Being a small issue, it will tend to find its way into firm hands and stay there for the duration.

Seymour, Pierce's experience in these matters suggests that the offer is pitched at a price which will see it go to a premium of between 1 and 1½ points, so successful tenders will be in that range. It is not an issue geared to the small investor, who would not benefit from the franked investment income yield. Those who bid regardless should perhaps be reminded that with waterworks company tenders, stock is issued at the price investors go in for—there is no striking price.

## Bestwood expands corporate activities

BY FRANK KANE

Bestwood, the fast-growing investment holdings concern, yesterday announced the expansion of its corporate activities on three main fronts:

● The £7.5m purchase of Nottingham-based mining services company Forsyke will be mainly funded through a £4.2m rights issue.

● The group's unit operations, under the Atlanta Fund Management arm, will be expanded with the £0.3m cash purchase of James Finlay Unit Trust Management.

● At the same time, Bestwood forecast that profits for the current year would be not less than £880,000, excluding any contribution from Forsyke. This compares with £224,000 last time, of which 90 per cent came from Forsyke dividends.

The size of the cash call came as some surprise. When the buy was first announced last July, Mr Tony Cole, Bestwood chairman, said that not more than £2m of the total price would be satisfied through the issue of new shares.

The rights—on the basis of four for seven at a deeply discounted 280p—was necessary, according to Mr Cole yesterday, because of higher working capital requirements following increased business at Forsyke. He also pointed to the steep rise in Bestwood's shares since July, when they have roughly doubled.

The Forsyke deal is regarded as the core of Bestwood's new industrial division. It is one of the leading ground freezing contractors in the UK, and at the moment is carrying out a major project for the National Coal

Board in the new Vale of Belvoir coalfield in Nottinghamshire.

Work commenced on this contract last summer and is expected to run for two and a half years. Also last summer, a separate agreement was signed with the NCB to provide a minimum of nine explosion drilling rigs and crews, but this could rise to as many as 17 rigs and may be extended beyond its June 1987 expiry date.

Mr Cole also indicated that ground freezing—in which water-bearing ground is frozen as a prelude to drilling and shoring—could be in demand following any decision to build a cross-channel tunnel.

The rights issue has already been sub-underwritten by institutions, and is the second cash call for the purpose of financing an

acquisition this year. Bestwood previously owned a 24.6 per cent stake in Forsyke and will now buy the balance from the previous owners, a Belgian company called Franki.

The profit forecast represents a 177 per cent increase over last time. Mr Cole said that the directors had not yet decided whether to consolidate Forsyke's profit for the current year with this would obviously increase the group outcome for 1985. In the year to June 30 1985 Forsyke made a profit of £83.1m. Also at that date it had net assets of £8.8m and a surplus on valuation of fixed assets of £8.8m.

Mr Cole said that the dividend for the year would be held at 6p on the increased share capital. Bestwood shares closed yesterday at 410p, down only 5p despite the rights.

## Marley bid rumours continue to grow

BY DAVID GOODHART

The reorganisation at Marley, building materials group, continued to fuel bid rumours yesterday and the share price rose another 5p to close at 114p.

Sir Robert Clark, who took over as non-executive chairman in May, strenuously denied rumours that the Aisher family is planning to sell its 15 per cent stake.

"We are going through a

major strategic re-think at the moment but the family is in full agreement with what is going on and are not discussing a sale of their stake," he said.

However he was less firm in dispelling rumours of a possible sale of Marley's DIY subsidiary, Payless. "My future has not yet been decided upon," he said.

It is understood that Marley is looking for a chief executive.

The previous management structure did not include the post.

Woolworth and Norcross have been mentioned as possible bidders for Marley or its subsidiaries. Woolworth said last night: "We never comment on market rumours."

In the first six months of 1985 Marley saw its pre-tax profits fall from £9.66m to £5.14m.

## Bassett in £0.86m buy

Bassett Foods announced yesterday that it has bought the goodwill, trade marks and stocks of Anglo Bellamy from Rowatree Mackintosh for £860,000, inheriting a further £350,000 in debt.

The sale was agreed in principle in September. Anglo Bellamy, which made a £1m loss last year, makes bubblegum, Beech Nut chewing gum, Fouters fruit cakes and a number of children's confectionery lines.

## COMPANY NEWS IN BRIEF

## RESULTS

**JACKSON GROUP**, the East Anglian-based construction and industrial services concern, made pre-tax profits of £428,000 (£444,000) for the six months to June 30, up from £141,500 (£151,211) turnover. The group aims to at least attain 1984 performance levels for this year. The interim dividend is 1.2p (same). The company's shares are traded on the over-the-counter market made by Granville and Co.

**BISCHT YIN**, metals and minerals dealer and investment company, saw pre-tax profit fall to £40,000 from £42,000 in the six months to June 30. Gross income was £106,000 (£133,000), an 8.5 per cent fall. The company's shares are traded on the over-the-counter market made by Granville and Co.

**JOVE INVESTMENT TRUST**, British American General Trust holds 1,825m of income shares (12.8 per cent) and its parent company, Shires Investment, holds 1,825m of income shares (1.6 per cent).

**BRADFORD PROPERTY TRUST** raised pre-tax profits to £5,640 (£4,960) in the half year to October 5 1985. Tax took £2,23m.

(£2,172), and earnings per share based on net profits attributable to ordinary holders were 14.5p (11.5p). The interim dividend is lifted to 4.5p (3.25p).

**NORTHERN SECURITIES** Trust increased net asset value per 25p share to 199.5p (184.4p) as at September 30 1985. Gross income for the six months period was £225,094 (£202,858) and pre-tax profits £243,972 (£154,281). Earnings per share came to 1.45p (0.88p) and the net interim dividend is raised to 0.7p (0.67p).

**PARKER KNOLL** profits for the first few weeks of the current year were higher than for the comparable period last year, Mr Martin Jourdan, the chairman, told the AGM. Its textile merchandising companies continued to perform well and furniture order books were healthy.

**LONDON & ASSOCIATED** Investment Trust reported pre-tax profits for the first half of 1985 up from £189,000 to £193,000 on gross income up to £418,000 (£255,000). Earnings per 10p share were 0.73p (4.47p) before extraordinary items, and as usual there is no interim payment.

**DERWENT VALLEY Holdings**, property investment company,

saw pre-tax profits improve from £26,145 to £37,158 in turnover up to £36,960 (£31,951) in the six months to the end of June. The interim dividend is unchanged at 15p. The tax charge was £11,000 (£7,800).

**YEARLING BONDS** interest rate for this week's issue is 11½ per cent, down ¼ of a percentage point from last week, and compares with 10½ per cent a year ago. The bonds are issued at par and are redeemable on November 12 1986. A full list of issues will be published in tomorrow's edition.

## BIDS AND DEALS

**BRASWAY** rights acceptances have totalled 2,174,598 shares (£21.75 per cent of the issue). The balance has been sold in the market.

**MAGNETIC MATERIALS** Group offer for sale of just under 5m shares closed oversubscribed yesterday morning.

**HEWLETT STUART**, the Glasgow-based plant hire and seller, has decided not to go ahead with its planned £1.1m acquisition of the Harrogate Hire Company. Mr Alistair Deakin, Hewlett finance

director, said there had been legal complications.

**AULT & WILSON'S** discussions with Sherwin-Williams of Cleveland, Ohio, regarding the possible sale to them of the company's automotive paint operations have been concluded since the parties were not able to agree terms.

**HEYWOOD WILLIAMS** Group, aluminium and glass specialist, has acquired Birmingham Powder Coatings, manufacturer of powder coat paint finishing. The purchase consideration is the issue of 800,000 new Heywood Williams shares, of which 400,000 have been placed at 147p per share and £12,000 cash. Based on the placing price, the deal is worth £118m. Birmingham Powder made a profit of £287,000 in the year ended March '81.

**JAMES NEILL HOLDINGS**, the hand toolmaker which is bidding £12m for Spear & Jackson has launched another appeal to Spear's shareholders to accept its offer. The companies were an excellent match and together would form a British group with an excellent future, Mr Hugh Neill, the Neill chairman, wrote. He also rejected the Neill arguments as containing nothing new and said it did not want to take on the problems besetting Neill.

**TECHNICARE** International, a subsidiary of Turiff Corporation, has agreed to purchase 40 per cent of Bellman Computing with options to bring the total shareholding up to 85 per cent by 1988.

**THE MERGER** between Crest Nicholson and H. Pearce & Son is not to be referred to the Monopolies Commission.

**TELEPHONE RENTALS** has received acceptances in respect of 5.45m shares (93.11 per cent of the issued share capital) of Cam-Group, USM-quoted paging equipment maker. The offer, now unconditional and will remain open until further notice.

**CHANNEL HOTELS** and Properties has increased its holding in Alibon and Sons, footwear manufacturer and retailer, to 49.50m ordinary shares (6.03 per cent).

**BENNETT & FOUNTAIN** Group has bought Queensway Electrical, wholesaler, for £100,000, plus stock of various surplus items (Electronics), retailer, for £5,000.

**DOLANORE HOLDINGS** has signed agreement to buy the Vintage Soft Drinks business from Varani Group UK.

**INDEPENDENT Newspapers'** associate companies in the Noble Group have agreed to sell three radio stations in California, US, for a total of \$45m (\$31m) from which Independent is expected to realise \$12m.

**MACFARLANE GROUP** (Glasgow), holding company with packaging and printing interests, has acquired Lancashire Box, a container maker and distributor, for £350,000. The consideration comprises £75,480 in cash and the issue of 371,280 ordinary shares.

**BARROW HESBURN GROUP**, industrial holding company, has sold its loss-making subsidiary Seaward, a wholesaler of hand-knitting yarns and knitted garments to Walsbourne (Holdings) for £75,000.

## electrocomponents

## INTERIM RESULTS

30 September 1985

## Trading results and prospects

- Strong growth in first half
- Two new US subsidiaries acquired on 1st October 1985
- Board is confident of continued progress for current year and beyond, but increasingly competitive market conditions indicate that growth rates in the immediate future will be lower than first half
- Interim dividend increased to 1.9p (1.6p)

	Half year to 30.9.85 (unaudited)	Half year to 30.9.84 (unaudited)	Year to 31.3.85 (audited)
Sales turnover	£89,544	£73,674	£164,024
Profit before interest received	15,284	12,185	28,497
Interest received	743	568	1,090
Profit before taxation	16,027	12,753	29,587
Taxation	6,410	5,718	13,087
Profit after taxation	9,617	7,035	16,500
Minority interests	71	47	153
Earnings available for shareholders	9,546	6,988	16,347
Dividends	1,937	1,631	5,351
Retained earnings	7,609	5,357	10,996
Dividends per share: Interim	1.9p	1.6p	1.6p
Final	—	—	3.65p
Earnings per share	9.57p	6.86p	16.04p
Increases over corresponding period:			
Sales	21.5%	27.8%	26.9%
Profit	25.7%	28.8%	33.1%
Net Group Bank Balances:	£9.5m	£4.2m	£2.5m

The audited figures are extracted from the company's full accounts for the year ended 31 March 1985. These accounts received an unqualified report and have been filed with the Registrar of Companies.

## electrocomponents

Harrier House, St. Albans Road East, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 0HE

## SAINSBURY'S Record Group Performance

The unaudited interim results for the Group were:

£ million	1985 28 weeks to 5th October	1984 28 weeks to 5th October	Increase
Sales*	1,831.6	1,598.3	14.6%
Retail Profit	85.2	71.8	18.7%
Retail Margin	4.65%	4.49%	
Associates	7.2	3.3	118.7%
Group Profit before Tax	92.4	75.1	23.2%
Group Profit after Estimated Tax	60.1	52.0	15.5%
Earnings per Share (fully taxed @ 35%)	8.60p	7.06p	21.8%
Dividend per Share	1.65p	1.4p	17.9%

\*includes VAT £82.5 million (1984 £69.4 million)

## Salient Points

1 Profit growth of 23.2% reflected substantial improvement in all areas of the Group's activities. Retail profit increased by 18.7% and the net margin percentage was 4.65%, a record level for the first half. Our prices have remained highly competitive, and we have made further gains in productivity, as well as providing better customer service at the checkouts.

2 Of the total Group sales of £1,832 million, supermarket sales of £1,783 million show an increase of 13.9%. Supermarket volume growth exceeded 9%, with the level of price inflation reducing to 4.2%.

3 Five supermarkets opened in the half year, giving a net increase in sales area of 127,000 sq ft. All are trading well ahead of forecast and at the new supermarket outside Guildford, sales volume set a new Company record for an opening week. Of the ten stores to open in the second half of the year, seven will be trading before Christmas.

4 Homebase sales increased by 45% to £48.6 million and despite continuing high development costs, profit increased from £0.3 million to £1.6 million. Three stores were opened in the half year, and in the second half two stores will open to bring the total number of Homebase outlets to 23.

5 All Associates performed well. SavaCentre's profit increased by 49%; Haverhill Meat Products is once again showing good profits, and Shaw's, the Company's American Associate, achieved excellent results.

6 The 1984/1985 distribution under our profit sharing scheme resulted in more than 1.5 million shares going to over 11,000 employees who chose to take all or part of their distribution in shares rather than cash. As usual, no provision for profit sharing has been made in the half year's accounts, since the level of profit share is dependent on the full year's results.

**Interim Dividend**  
The Directors have declared an interim dividend of 1.65p per share (1984 1.4p) which, together with its associated tax credit, is equivalent to a gross dividend of 2.36p. The total amount of the net dividend is £11.5 million (1984 £9.7 million). This dividend will be paid on 17th January 1986 to shareholders on the register of members at the close of business on 20th December 1985.

Good food costs less at Sainsbury's

## LAND SECURITIES PLC

(Incorporated in England under the Companies Act 1947; Registered No. 201412)

Placing of  
£100,000,000 10 per cent.  
First Mortgage Debenture Stock 2025 at £92.999 per cent.,  
payable as to £25 per cent. on 8th November, 1985 and  
as to the balance by 31st January, 1986

Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for the whole of the above Stock to be admitted to the Official List.

In accordance with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange £10,000,000 of the Stock has been offered to the market and may be available to the public on the date of publication of this advertisement.

Listing Particulars of the Stock have been circulated in the Extra Statistical Services and copies may be obtained during normal business hours on any weekday (excluding Saturdays) up to and including 20th November, 1985 from:

J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited  
120 Cheapside,  
London EC2V 6DS

Land Securities PLC  
35 St. Thomas Street,  
London SE1 1PS

Land Securities PLC  
Landsec House,  
21 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4PY

Rowe & Pitman  
1 Finsbury Avenue,  
London EC2M 2PA

Cazenove & Co.  
12 Tokenhouse Yard,  
London EC2R 7AN

and, until 8th November, 1985 only, from:

The Company's Announcements Office,  
The Stock Exchange,  
London EC2P 2BT

6th November, 1985



## UK COMPANY NEWS

## NOTICE OF ISSUE

This advertisement is issued in compliance with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange. Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for the undermentioned Stock to be admitted to the Official List.

## Chester Waterworks Company

(Incorporated in England on 26th June, 1857 by The Chester Waterworks Act, 1857)

OFFER FOR SALE BY TENDER OF  
**£1,500,000**

**8 per cent. Redeemable Preference Stock, 1992**  
(which will mature for redemption at par on 31st December, 1992)

**Minimum Price of Issue £100 per £100 of Stock**

yielding at that price, together with the associated tax credit at the current rate, £11.42 per cent.

This Stock is an investment authorised by Section 1 of the Trustee Investments Act, 1961 and by paragraph 10 (as amended in its application to the Company) of Part II of the First Schedule thereto.

The preferential dividends on this Stock, which will rank *pari passu* for dividends with the existing Preference Stocks, will be at the rate of 8 per cent. per annum without deduction of tax. Under the imputation tax system, the associated tax credit, at the current rate of Advance Corporation Tax (7½% of the distribution), is equal to a rate of 3½% per cent. per annum.

Tenders for the Stock must be made on the Form of Tender supplied with the Listing Particulars and must be accompanied by a deposit of £10 per £100 nominal amount of Stock applied for and sent in a sealed envelope to National Westminster Bank PLC, New Issues Department, P.O. Box No. 79, 2 Princes Street, London EC2P 2BD marked "Tender for Chester Water Stock" so as to be received not later than 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 13th November, 1985. The balance of the purchase money will be payable on or before Thursday, 14th November, 1985.

Copies of the Listing Particulars, on the terms of which alone Tenders will be considered, and Forms of Tender will be available, for collection only, during normal business hours today and tomorrow from the Company Announcements Office of The Stock Exchange, London EC2. Copies may also be obtained during normal business hours from:—

Seymour, Pierce & Co.,  
10, Old Jewry, London EC2R 8EA.

National Westminster Bank PLC,  
New Issues Department, P.O. Box No. 79, 2 Princes Street, London EC2P 2BD

and 33, Eastgate Street, Chester, CH1 1XA

or from the Company's principal office, Aqua House, 45, Boughton, Chester, CH3 5AU.

6th November, 1985.

This advertisement is issued in compliance with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange. Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for the grant of permission to deal in the ordinary shares of Ronald Martin Group PLC in the Unlisted Securities Market. It is emphasised that no application has been made for the shares to be admitted to listing. A proportion of the shares being placed may be available to the public through the market during market hours today.

## RONALD MARTIN GROUP PLC

(Registered in England No. 1079693)

### PLACING

by

**Pannure Gordon & Co.**

of

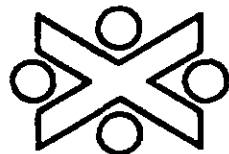
2,287,640 ordinary shares of 10p each at 90p per share

Authorised	Share Capital	Issued and now being
£850,000	ordinary shares of 10p each	issued fully paid
		£755,000

The Company is one of the United Kingdom's leading independent suppliers of office equipment, furniture and stationery. The Company is also involved in the wholesale supply of gift and commercial stationery and related products. Particulars relating to the Company are available in the Extra Statistical Service and copies of such particulars may be obtained during normal business hours on weekdays (Saturdays excepted) up to and including 20th November, 1985 from:

Pannure Gordon & Co.,  
9 Moorfields Highwalk, London EC2Y 9DS  
6th November, 1985.

This advertisement is issued in compliance with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange. It does not constitute an offer of, or invitation to the public to subscribe for or to purchase, any securities.



## The Governor and Company of the BANK OF SCOTLAND

(Constituted by Act of the Scots Parliament in 1695)

**U.S. \$250,000,000**

### Undated Floating Rate Primary Capital Notes

The following have agreed to subscribe or procure subscribers for the Notes:

Merrill Lynch International & Co.

Bank of America International Limited  
Banque Bruxelles Lambert S.A.  
Baring Brothers & Co., Limited  
Crédit Lyonnais  
Daiwa Europe Limited  
Goldman Sachs International Corp.  
Kidder, Peabody International Limited  
Lloyds Merchant Bank Limited  
Mitsui Trust Bank (Europe) S.A.  
Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited  
Morgan Stanley International  
Nomura International Limited  
PK Christiana Bank (UK) Limited  
Société Générale  
S.G. Warburg & Co. Ltd.

Bankers Trust International Limited  
Barclays Merchant Bank Limited  
Citicorp Investment Bank Limited  
Dai-ichi Kangyo International Limited  
Dresdner Bank Aktiengesellschaft  
E F Hutton & Company (London) Ltd.  
Kleinwort, Benson Limited  
Mitsubishi Trust & Banking Corporation (Europe) S.A.  
Samuel Montagu & Co. Limited  
Morgan Guaranty Ltd  
Nippon Credit International (Hong Kong) Limited  
Orion Royal Bank Limited  
Saitama Bank (Europe) S.A.  
Sumitomo Trust International Limited

The British Linen Bank Limited

Application has been made for the Notes, in the denominations of U.S. \$10,000 and U.S. \$250,000 each, constituting the above issue to be admitted to the Official List by the Council of The Stock Exchange, subject only to the issue of the temporary global Note. Interest will be payable semi-annually in arrears in May and November, the first payment being made in May 1986.

Listing Particulars are available in the statistical services of Eitel Statistical Services Limited. Copies of the Listing Particulars may be obtained in the form of an Extel Card during usual business hours on any weekday (Saturdays and public holidays excepted) from the Company Announcements Office of the Quotations Department of The Stock Exchange, Throgmorton Street, London EC2P 2BT, up to and including 8th November, 1985 or during usual business hours on any weekday (public holidays excepted) at the addresses shown below up to and including 20th November, 1985:—

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Edinburgh EH2 4AE

Bank of Scotland,  
55 Old Broad Street,  
London EC2P 2HL

Citibank, N.A.,  
326 Strand,  
London WC2R 1HB

6th November, 1985

## Brikat exceeds budget with advance to £1.3m

Brikat Group, the USM quoted business accounting software group, has achieved record expansion of sales and profits in its second year as a public company.

With turnover more than doubled at £3.28m, against £2.35m, pre-tax profits jumped from £728,000 to £1.28m for the year to July 31 1985. The directors say the profit achievement exceeds their own budget.

They are recommending a final dividend of 2.5p net making a total for the year of 4p, compared with a single payment of 0.7p previously. Stated earnings per 5p share increased from 8.5p to 14p.

The growing demand for business microcomputers and software referred to at the interim stage has continued throughout the year.

The directors say the group's balance sheet remains strong, despite the significant resources absorbed by acquisitions.

The principal emphasis of the group's activities during the year was in providing an integrated

### BOARD MEETINGS

The following companies have notified dates of board meetings to the Stock Exchange. Such meetings are usually held for the purpose of considering dividends. Official indications are not available as to whether the dividends are interim or final and the sub-divisions shown below are based mainly on last year's timetable.

**TODAY**  
Insurance—Commercial and Industrial Trust, Grosvenor, Shuck, WA  
Holdings—  
Finnish—Jassu.

**FUTURE DATES**  
Interim—  
Allied Irish Banks Nov 13  
Crang and Ross Nov 13  
External Investment Trust Nov 13  
Great Portland Estates Nov 13  
PCT Nov 13  
Powell Duffryn Nov 21  
Road Publishing Nov 11  
Stavely Industries Nov 14  
TR Natural Resources Int. Ltd. Dec 2  
Teco Nov 13  
Yorkville Nov 7  
Bankers Investment Trust Dec 19  
Fenner (J. K.) Nov 26

range of software, microcomputers, consumables and maintenance services to the business microcomputer marketplace. The group has made considerable progress in its strategic development during the year and to this end, its present activities are now being organised into divisions in order to maintain effective growth over the next few years.

To assist in achieving this objective, the directors are actively seeking to recruit additional senior management.

## Acquisition helps UDO to almost doubled profits

PRE-TAX PROFITS almost doubled for UDO Holdings in the year to the end of July, 1985. And in line with the forecast at the time of its coming to the USM in October last year a total dividend of 3.75p is to be paid with a recommended final of 2.5p.

On turnover up by 38 per cent from £3.15m to £4.26m taxable earnings improved to £1.55m, including a contribution of £248,000 from Sims, Malloch, in the three months since it became a subsidiary. Pre-tax profits for 1983-1984 were £386,000.

Mr Terry Rutter, chairman of this drawing office supplies

## Gable House acquisitions

Gable House Properties has announced three separate acquisitions for a sum totalling £1.925m, excluding expenses.

The company is to acquire a modern freehold nursing home in Winchester, Hampshire; a freehold development property in Westbourne Grove, London, W; and the freehold interest in the group's long leasehold office building, College House, St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Gable House is to issue a total of 1,241,666 new ordinary shares as consideration for Winchester and Westbourne Grove and £354,100 nominal of 10p per cent convertible unsecured loan stock 1985-1995 as consideration for College House.

Gable House directors say that with planning permission available, Westbourne House will be a substantial addition — consideration is £800,000.

The amount payable for Winchester is £350,000.

## Newmarket realises some investments for redeployment

Newmarket Company, the Bermuda-based venture capital concern, says that persistent unease over publicly quoted technology-based stocks and the steady requirement from existing investors for further funding continued in the third quarter to end-September 1985.

Against this background, Newmarket has taken the opportunity to realise those investments which have failed to live up to expectations, says Mr Alan Henderson, the chairman.

"Although this takes time, it releases funds which can be put to more constructive use in the support of younger, more promising ventures," he adds.

During the third quarter, a new UK investment was made in Procyon Research which represents the transfer of young talent and ideas from an academic background to the first stages of commercial development through the involvement of New Cambridge Research.

Another investment was made in Sepacor, a bioengineering company based in the US, which continues Newmarket's policy of co-investing with Venture Associates.

At the end of the third quarter Newmarket's net appraised value per 5 cents share of assets was \$5.35 (£1.71) compared with \$4.4



three months earlier. Operating revenues for the nine months to end-September amounted to \$225,000, against \$284,000. Expenditure was \$1.2m compared with \$1.67m, and after minorities there was a net loss of \$561,000 (\$389,000) excluding realised portfolio gains. Net loss per share was unchanged at two cents.

## Firstland Oil expands its Falklands interests

Firstland Oil & Gas, which holds the first oil prospecting licence granted for the Falkland Islands, has confirmed its long-term commitment to the area by buying the 220 sq m Douglas Station, which covers about 12½ per cent of East Falkland.

During its first year of operations the company has carried out a series of geological studies. It intends to continue its activities on the islands and is having discussions with the Government.

The Douglas purchase will give the company a base on the Falklands for 13 months to the end of June 1986. Firstland suffered a pre-tax loss of \$37,218 on turnover of £154,849. As it was incorporated only in May 1984 there are no comparative figures. With no tax charge the loss per share came out at 2p. It is not proposed to pay a dividend.

The year was marked, the directors say, by substantial investment to lay the founda-

tions for the future. However the company ended the period with no bank borrowings.

It is intended to offset the high risk of the South Atlantic with exploration and production in the mature oil areas of the US.

In Texas and Oklahoma it has added a little less than \$2m (£2.0m) worth of proven reserves (unescalated and undiscounted) to the company's assets.

In the year a small profit was made before allowing for depletion, amortisation and depreciation.

Further exploration and development acreage is being sought and since the year end almost all the remaining interests in the Tounset lease have been bought. That will bring immediate income.

Firstland also has interests in Australia in the Surat-Bowen basin where it has recently been given an authority to prospect by the Queensland Department of Mines.

FT

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- The role the major aerospace manufacturers can play in promoting civil aviation developments
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Mr Colin Marshall  
British Airways  
Mr William H Draper III  
Export-Import Bank of the United States

Professor Dr Günter D Eser  
International Air Transport Association  
Mr Joe Sutter  
Boeing Commercial Airplane Company  
Mr Jean Pierson  
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This conference precedes the major Aerospace '86 Exhibition at Changi International Airport.

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## THE CAR INDUSTRY

# Dutch Volvo comes back from the brink

By Kenneth Gooding, Motor Industry Correspondent

FIVE YEARS ago the only car producer in the Netherlands, a David in a world of automotive Goliaths, was on the brink of bankruptcy. Not only has it survived, but its recovery is a remarkable story involving the use of another manufacturer's name and distribution network, with major components such as engines and transmissions produced by a competitor and, as seems almost inevitable when a car manufacturer gets into trouble, a big injection of state funds.

But the Dutch Government's faith in its domestic car company increasingly seems justified. Last week, for example, the company, called Volvo BV but only 30 per cent owned by the Swedish group with the rest in Dutch hands, unveiled the first of a new range of medium-sized cars which will stand alongside its ageing 300 series and gradually replace them in the 1990s.

Dutch Volvo has come so far so fast that its management is already under pressure to return the company to the private sector by way of a stock market flotation. However, Mr. Andre Deleze, the chairman, says he wants to see if the new models—predictably called the 400 series—live up to expectations before asking private investors to put up their cash.

As recently as 1980 the company suffered a loss of £1 100m (£23m) which caused yet another crisis in the history of an organisation which started out as the car business within the DAF group.

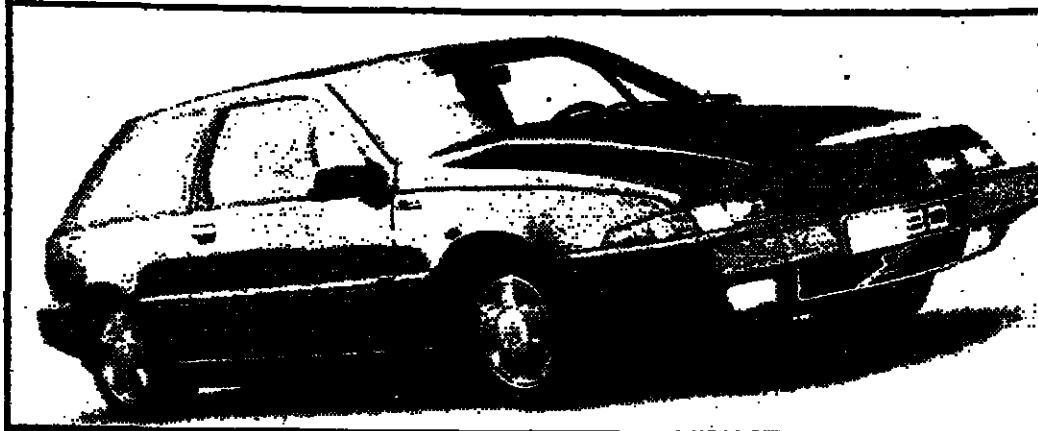
Last year Volvo BV made a 3 per cent return on capital—up from £1 14m in 1983—and Mr. Deleze's objective is to build that up to a respectable 10 to 15 per cent return by 1990.

Much will depend on the new range of cars.

Dutch Volvo has decided to start with the top model in the range, the 460ES, then to steadily introduce other 400 series vehicles so that eventually there will be three, four and five door hatchbacks and saloons with a variety of engines and transmissions.

The top model—a three-door, four-seater hatchback which looks much more like a Japanese sports coupe than any of the rather angular Swedish or Dutch Volvos seen in the past—will take the company into the 1990s for the first time.

Dutch Volvo has set itself very modest targets for the 460ES. It wants to produce



The 460ES, which will spearhead Dutch Volvo's assault on the US market, and its chairman, Mr. Andre Deleze

35,000 a year, once output reaches a peak, but intends to export 25,000 of them to the US.

To put that into perspective, in 1980 the company sold only 68,000 cars. Last year it sold a record 106,500 and in 1985 expects to retail about 110,000 compared with a current annual capacity of 150,000. The best market is the UK, with 1984 sales of 35,000, followed by the Netherlands (18,300), Sweden (10,400), France (9,300) and West Germany (6,000).

Although Dutch Volvo is a minnow compared with major European companies such as Fiat, Ford, General Motors (Opel-Vauxhall), Volkswagen, Renault and the Peugeot-Citroen-Talbot group, each of which produces well over 1m cars a year, its 1984 output puts it in the same league as Italy's Alfa Romeo (200,000 cars last year) and Saab of Sweden (102,000 cars).

To make its entry into the US, planned for late 1987, Dutch Volvo will use the Swedish Volvo dealer network which is now revving at top speed and should sell over 100,000 cars there this year out of a total production of 285,000.

The Swedish company took a majority stake in Dutch Volvo in 1976 after the oil supply crisis had left the world wondering if the large cars Volvo was producing in Sweden had any long-term future. The 300 series cars, already designed and developed by DAF, were renamed and some Volvo features added.

Thus, Volvo dealers in Europe had a smaller and less expensive model to sell, at a moment when there was a hiccup in demand

for big cars. Although in the early stages neither the Swedish or Dutch companies made any profit on the 300 series, it stopped dealers deserting to other marques—particularly to the Japanese who were making headway in the late 1970s.

Swedish Volvo spent more than £1 300m on its new Dutch subsidiary before deciding it could not bear the mounting losses while its own financial position was under strain.

In the early spring of 1981 the Swedish management got together with Dutch government officials to hammer out a new package of ownership and aid.

The Dutch Government was already involved because, since the 1976 takeover, it had a 45 per cent shareholding in Volvo BV. And not only jobs were at stake, the company was a major exporter. (Last year 72 per cent of Dutch Volvo's turnover was generated outside its home market and the 300 series cars alone accounted for exports worth £1 235m).

But it was by no means a foregone conclusion that the state would be willing to bail out the company. The giant RSV shipbuilding and engineering group was on its way to bankruptcy, taking with it £1 2bn of government support while the Hogovens steel group was asking for £1 1bn. Any other company seeking state aid had to show that it had a viable long-term plan and was in a growth business.

This tough approach was echoed in the new Volvo BV management. Mr. Deleze, a Belgian civil engineer who was a teacher before joining the motor industry on the produc-

tion side, recalls: "I made it clear that Volvo BV was not going to be run as a job-creation organisation but as a profit-oriented business."

Volvo BV was promised its money, a total of £1 618m over the years to 1986 to be spent on the development of a new range of cars and the capital investment needed for them. Some £1 460m would be injected by the state, mainly through the National Investment Bank (which now owns 49 per cent of Dutch Volvo) with Swedish Volvo finding the rest.

Under the terms of the agreement, Dutch Volvo continued to use the Volvo name and distribution network. But there was a subtle change of emphasis in the relationship between the companies. No longer was the BV management under the direct control of the Swedes but it had to make its own way—checking with Swedish Volvo only after formulating its plans.

Dan Werbin, Swedish Volvo's marketing director, says that the partial divorce from his company sparked off renewed energy and enthusiasm at Volvo BV which might not have occurred if it had remained a subsidiary.

In line with Mr. Deleze's warning that Dutch Volvo could not be run as a welfare organisation, 500 of the 6,000 employees were made redundant in 1981. But as the company has recovered, it has recruited 220 engineers for the new car range—taking the total to 750—and others for its spare parts operations so that by the end of last year the payroll totalled 6,330.

The 400 series range was

designed by a Dutch Volvo team which had to compete with outside competitors from Italy. Although early development six years ago took place in Sweden, since 1981 it has been a Dutch project, using some of Swedish Volvo's facilities as well as engineering help from consultants. For example, Volvo BV used Lotus Engineering in the UK as a "sounding board" to check ideas on braking, ride and handling and also to complete work on noise and vibration problems.

In the late 1970s Swedish Volvo signed a technical co-operation deal with Renault, the state-owned French group, to use its small-car, front-wheel-drive technology. As a result Renault engines and transmissions were used by Dutch Volvo in the 300 series cars.

For the 400 series range, Volvo BV asked Porsche Engineering in West Germany to develop a "new" engine from the existing Renault parts. This gives Dutch Volvo its own, distinctive power unit in the 400 series while enabling Renault to produce the engines on existing tooling under an arm's length commercial supply contract.

However, the Renault transmission to fit what is the first front-wheel-drive Volvo has been modified to such an extent that it is no longer interchangeable with the version assembled by Renault. It will be assembled by Dutch Volvo at its component plant at St. Truiden, across the border in Belgium.

Mr. Deleze says that should demand for the 499 series range reach 250,000—which gives a clear indication of the



company's expectations—it would be worthwhile for Dutch Volvo to take over assembly of the engine as well.

The company made one important miscalculation. It needs automatic transmission for the versions of the 400 series to be sold in the US and designed the car around a revolutionary, four-speed unit being jointly developed by Renault and Volkswagen. However, its production is well behind schedule, perhaps by a year. So Dutch Volvo made a last-minute switch, involving much late-night engineering work, to a four-speed unit already being produced by ZF of West Germany.

In the past three years Dutch Volvo has been investing in research and development at the rate of around 9 to 10 per cent of turnover (which reached £1 1.8bn last year, up from £1 1.57bn) well above the industry average but, of course, much less than the major car groups in absolute terms.

It has modernised its car assembly plant at Born in the southern province of Limburg where a new paint facility—which can cope with 200,000 cars a year—has cost £1 200m alone and another £1 20m has been spent on 80 robots.

As Mr. Deleze maintains: "Volvo BV was practically bankrupt in 1980, so we have come a long way."

Now everything depends on the new 400 series range and, particularly, on the 490ES which will be put on sale progressively in European countries from March next year before making its debut in the crucial US market. Initial reaction from the States has been enthusiastic. The US Volvo company believes it could sell 10,000 to 15,000 in the first year and if the model finds acceptance, swallow all the predicted 35,000 annual output. The 460ES will be sold in two versions in the US, one at a lower price than any other Volvo—\$10,000 to \$11,000—and another at \$12,000 to \$14,000, just below the price of the cheapest four-door Swedish-built car.

Not only should the new Dutch model set total Volvo car sales in the US rolling towards 150,000 to 160,000 in the 1990s, but it will also play a big part in changing the Volvo image. As Dan Werbin says: "We don't want to be seen only as producers of cars that are boringly good."

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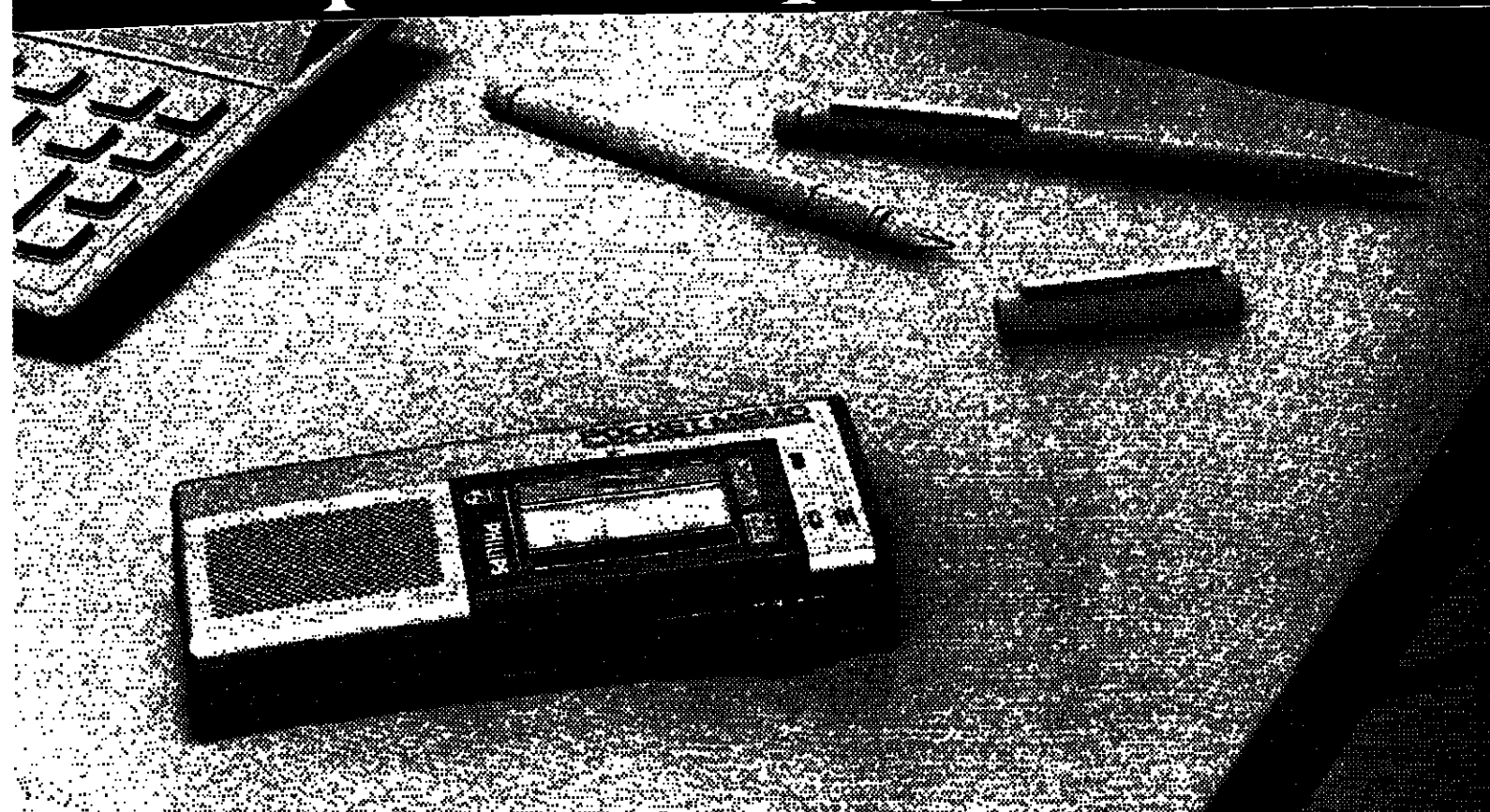
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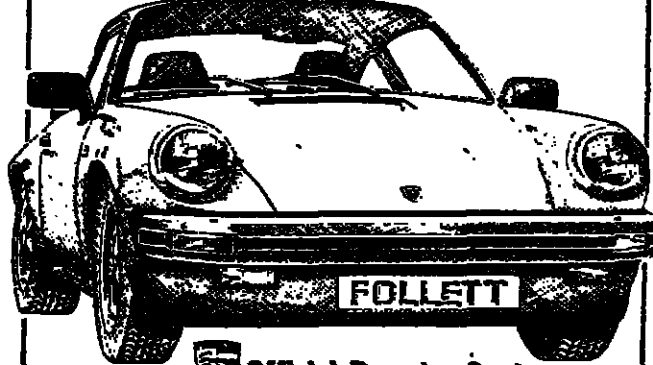


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## Change of employer not prejudicial to main contractor

Under the main contract the "employer" was defined to mean the Board. The engineer meant:

misled, but McGregor required arbitration against the Board. It was only when those proceedings became active in August 1984, that the Board, for the first time, asserted that the employer under the main contract was SUKL. Later still, the Board asserted that the employer was not SUKL but SLH, SUKL's wholly-owned subsidiary.

The answer to both questions was No. McGregor was understandably sorry to find itself in dispute with SUKL/SHL, but that was the effect of the schemes made under the Acts of 1988 and 1981, and there was nothing McGregor could have

The declarations were refused.  
For McGregor: Desmond  
Wright QC and Richard Wilmot-  
Smith (Maughan and Hall, New-  
castle upon Tyne).  
For the Board: Jules Sher QC  
and Christopher Russell (British  
Rail).  
For SUKL/SHL: Julian Cooke  
(Herbert Oppenheimer Nathan  
and Vandyk).  
**By Rachel Davies**  
Barrister

**AUTHORISED  
UNIT TRUSTS**

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LEY, West Midlands, as sales and marketing director. He was with Leyland Trucks as head of European business, having previously been sales and marketing director of Scammell Motors.

## A FRIEND FOR LIFE



Continental Life Insurance Co.

Suisse Life, Ltd. (Suisse Life, Ltd.)			Suisse Life, Ltd. (Suisse Life, Ltd.)		
Capital	100.00	100.00	Capital	100.00	100.00
Reserves	100.00	100.00	Reserves	100.00	100.00
Assets	100.00	100.00	Assets	100.00	100.00
Liabilities	100.00	100.00	Liabilities	100.00	100.00
Income	100.00	100.00	Income	100.00	100.00
Expenses	100.00	100.00	Expenses	100.00	100.00
Profit	100.00	100.00	Profit	100.00	100.00
Dividend	100.00	100.00	Dividend	100.00	100.00
Share Price	100.00	100.00	Share Price	100.00	100.00
Yield	100.00	100.00	Yield	100.00	100.00
Rating	100.00	100.00	Rating	100.00	100.00
Notes	100.00	100.00	Notes	100.00	100.00
Other	100.00	100.00	Other	100.00	100.00
Total	100.00	100.00	Total	100.00	100.00



<b>Wing Ltd</b> Aix, 1088	<b>EDC Trust Company (Jersey) Ltd.</b> 0534 20045 7-3 Seale St, St Helier, Jersey.	<b>Hambros Bank Ltd</b> 0534-36331 41, Bridgegate, London EC2	<b>Manufacturers Hanover</b> 01 588 2951 PO Box 92, St Peter Port (Guernsey)
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**The Charities Deposit Fund**

Adam & Co. plc

### 3-month call rat

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## COMMODITIES AND AGRICULTURE

## Tin pact creditors await their fate

BY STEFAN WAGSTYL

BANKERS AND metal traders around the world will be nervously awaiting the outcome of today's meeting of the International Tin Council, which has gathered in London for a second attempt to solve the tin market crisis.

The main question in their minds is whether the tin council's 22 members will meet the debt of the ITC has run up in its efforts to support tin prices above free market levels.

The 16 financial institutions which have lent money to the ITC, taking tin as security, are between them owed just over \$300m. The highest loans are believed to have been advanced by the Malaysian banks, Bank Bumiputra and Malayan Banking.

The 12 other banks involved are Arab Banking Corporation, ANZ, ABN of the Netherlands, Banque Indosuez of France, Arbutnot Latham, Hambros, Kleinwort Benson, Standard Chartered, and TSB of the UK, Bangkok Bank from

Thailand, Bank of Tokyo, and from Canada, Bank of Nova Scotia, Shearson Lehman, the US financial group, and Metallgesellschaft, the West German metals company, have also lent the ITC money.

Sir Adam Ridley, a director of Hambros Bank, acting as spokesman for the 16 lenders, said that they were all large enough to cope with any possible losses.

In addition to its bank borrowings, the ITC has outstanding forward contracts with brokers on the London Metal Exchange and others for some 68,000 tonnes of tin, which the council's buffer stock manager has agreed to buy at just under \$9,000 a tonne, or a total of over \$600m.

The bulk of these contracts—about 52,000 tonnes—is with ring-dealing members of the London Metal Exchange, the world's leading metals market. The size of these ITC commitments varies greatly from a maximum of 10,000 tonnes for

one member to a few hundred tonnes for others. The traders also have the degree to which their contracts to sell tin to the ITC are matched by contracts to buy tin from other LME brokers or elsewhere.

The traders involved are 15 of the 28 ring-dealing members: Amalgamated Metal Corporation (owned by Preussag of West Germany), Henry Bath (MIM Australia), Houstead Davis (Houstead), Gerald Metals (Gerald Metals, US); Gill and Duffus (Duffus, UK); Holco Trading (F. D. and F. Man UK); Lazme (Trans-World Metals Holdings, UK); MacIntyre Watson (Drexel Burnham Lambert Group, US); Meidist (privately-owned, UK); Metallgesellschaft (Metallgesellschaft, West Germany); MMC Metals (Malaysia Mining Corporation), Mocatta Commercial (Standard Chartered Bank), J. H. Rayner (Mining Lane) (S. & W. Berisford, UK); Shearson Lehman Metals (American Express, US), Rudolf Wolf (Noranda, Canada).

The tin council also has outstanding contracts outside the LME ring—notably with trading companies in south-east Asia, in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, the leading tin producers. Among them is believed to be Manilla, a well-diversified Malaysian trading company with interests in palm oil and rubber and property as well as tin.

Few, if any, of these bankers, brokers and traders will lose everything owed to them, even if the tin council collapses and sinks without trace. But all of them could be left holding stocks of tin which will be worth far below the \$9,140 a tonne at which the price was suspended. What will determine the extent of losses will be how far tin prices fall when trading resumes—and how fast.

● Banque Nationale de Paris points out that it has no involvement with the International Tin Council, as was incorrectly stated in the Financial Times yesterday.

## Crisis causes problems for rubber accord

BY Wong Sulong in Kuala Lumpur

THE CRISIS in the tin market is causing problems for the International Natural Rubber Organisation (Inro). Delegates from the organisation's 32 members, who ended a meeting here yesterday, have been told that banks now want guarantees from member governments, and not rubber stock warrants, to back loans to finance the proposed 150,000 tonne contingency stockpile.

The issue of the contingency rubber stockpile has come up because the buffer stock is approaching its 400,000 tonne limit. It is now believed to be close to 375,000 tonnes. At the meeting, "All council members reaffirmed their commitment to fulfil promptly their financial obligations" on the stockpile provisions, Inro said.

At the last council meeting in August, consumer members declared they would meet their contributions to the stockpile in cash, while some producers requested Inro to discuss with banks and taking warrants as security.

Banks, including two Malaysian Government-owned ones, have been insisting that warrants to finance a major part of the tin stockpile held by the International Tin Council, and they would be heavily exposed in the event of a collapse of tin prices.

Some Inro consumer countries at yesterday's meeting, informally sounded out to producers on an early resumption of renegotiation of a second rubber agreement.

The current pact expires at the end of this month, and has been extended by another two years.

Mr Aldo Hofmeister, who took over from fellow American, Mr Harvey Adams, as bufferstock manager, from this month, attended the Inro talks for the first time.

## Brazil faces big coffee losses

BY ANDREW WHITLEY IN RIO DE JANEIRO

HEAVY RAINS since the weekend in the main coffee producing regions of Brazil—Sao Paulo, Southern Minas Gerais and Parana State—have come too late to prevent a big fall in the country's coffee production next year, though they have relieved fears of a real disaster.

Four months of drought are thought to have reduced output by as much as a third compared with this year's bumper crop of 30m bags (60 kilos each).

Unofficial forecasts from the Brazilian Coffee Institute (IBC) put 1986/87 coffee production at between 19m and 23m bags. No formal announcement from the IBC on the full extent of the damage is expected before the end of the month.

Coffee brokers and exporters are more pessimistic than the IBC, putting the likely crop next year at anywhere between 15m and 18m bags: an estimate which, if realised, would virtually eliminate stocks available the following year and make the country seriously vulnerable to frost damage.

While the rains, which began in mid-October, have helped to ease the interior of Sao Paulo about 10 days ago and built up in intensity after

Friday, have curbed the losses suffered by many farmers in coffee and other crops, they are not likely to make up the damage caused so far to any significant extent.

Cotton has been badly affected in Sao Paulo state, with only 15,000 out of an initially forecast 300,000 hectares planted to date. In addition, the production of black beans, oranges, maize and milk have all been affected—the latter already provoking some domestic shortages.

Main import requirements are expected to rise as a result of the drought, from the previously anticipated 400,000 tonnes to nearer 1m tonnes.

To the relief of the IBC, local coffee prices have over the past few days begun to slide back from their recent peaks, provoked by the drought. But the Government is still concerned about Brazilian lack of competitiveness, and may take steps to release the 2.5m bags currently in the hands of the IBC on to the domestic market.

Coffee for immediate delivery is currently being quoted locally at Cr 1.5m (\$175) a bag, a price coffee growers complain has forced a 10 per cent shut-down in the local industry.

Richard Mooney writes: On the London futures market coffee prices fell back immediately after the rains were reported, but have since steadied. Nearby quotations had gained more than \$400 a tonne in a little over a month as concern grew about the Brazilian drought damage, with the January contract gaining \$200 last week alone. That position fell \$75.50 to \$1,913.50 a tonne on Monday and the decline continued to \$1,888 a tonne yesterday morning. But the price recovered to end the day virtually unchanged.

Peter Blackburn writes in Abidjan: Denis Bra Kanon, the Ivory Coast agricultural minister, said here yesterday that African coffee producers would support any concrete measures taken by the International Coffee Organisation to solve problems of underproduction and cut price sales to non-member countries and help save the international agreement.

Mr Bra Kanon, the new president of the 23 member Inter African Coffee Council, said that consumer countries must first agree on the question of sanctions before asking for the support of producer countries.

## Tighter UK pesticide rules proposed

BY TONY JACKSON

THE UK Government is inviting consultation on its proposed legislation to control the making and use of pesticides. The consultation process is to finish by the end of next February, and the legislation (part of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985) is expected to come into force by next June.

The regulations replace a series of mostly informal controls over the making and use of

pesticides. All pesticide suppliers will have to submit their products for approval before offering them for sale, and there will be control over all aspects of advertising and distribution.

Use of pesticides will be largely controlled through enforced training. The Ministry of Agriculture proposes that there will be "a general obligation on all those who use pesticides in the course of their business to ensure that they

and their employees have received adequate instructions and guidance in the safe, effective and humane use of pesticides."

The closing date for written comments is December 31, 1985, with a further two months being allowed for follow-up discussions. Comments should be sent to: Miss Denise Love, Room 682, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Great Westminster House, Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AE.

Mary Frings on the problems of the uranium industry  
Nuclear reactions in the US

THE RECENT signing of uranium supply contracts between Britain's Central Electricity Generating Board and two U.S. companies is a further example of the paradoxical situation in which export markets are still being found for U.S. uranium which is being priced off the home market by cheap imports.

Everest Minerals Corporation of Corpus Christi, Texas, and Energy Fuels (Nuclear) of Denver, Colorado, will each deliver 3.5m lbs of raw "yellow cake" uranium over a 10-year period beginning in 1987. The CEGB follows its decision to discontinue purchases in Namibia because of the political unrest in southern Africa. The Board said it was "delighted" to have found two companies in the U.S. which could compete on a world-wide basis and which had long term aspirations. There are not many of them left.

Although the U.S. is rich in uranium resources, the ores are not generally of high grade and recovery by conventional methods is not cheap, while solution mining, although highly efficient and less capital and labour-intensive, is not suitable for all ore-bearing structures.

Since 1980, world prices for uranium have tumbled more than 60 per cent from a high of \$43 a lb, and three-quarters of the 40-plus conventional U.S. mining companies have gone out of business. Many of the abandoned mines have flooded and may never again be operational. Employment in uranium exploration, production and milling has declined from 22,000 to under 3,500.

Just five years ago, the US was producing 40m lbs of uranium a year, twice as much as it was using. Much of the surplus went into strategic stockpiles. Production has now fallen by some 70 per cent. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), more than two-thirds of the uranium consumed in the US in 1983 was from foreign suppliers, unless current trends are

reversed.

There used to be restrictions on importing uranium into the US, except by foreign utilities for enrichment and re-export. The restrictions were lifted in 1975 as a surge in US reactor orders created fears of a future uranium shortage, and the DOE spent billions of dollars on additional enrichment facilities to handle the expected demand.

However, since the accident at Three Mile Island in 1979, no US utility has ordered a new reactor and more than 100 orders have been cancelled. Although heavily industrialised areas such as Chicago are 60 per cent dependent on nuclear power generation, the proportion nationwide is only 15 per cent, with a scheduled rise to 20 per cent in the 1990s.

US producers claim the low-cost imports are being unfairly subsidised by foreign governments. But US-mined uranium is still being exported, either through sales contracts like those signed with the CEGB or through European companies which have entered into joint ventures with U.S. producers in order to secure a reliable source of supply.

In the battle for survival US uranium mining companies feel they have been fighting not only foreign governments but

their own as well. This complaint stems from the DOE's decision at the end of 1983 to restructure its uranium enrichment policy, in an effort to win back foreign sales and recoup costs of the enrichment programme.

Until the mid-70s, the US Government held a monopoly on uranium enrichment for the non-military world, but has since lost two-thirds of that market to European consortia using low-cost uranium from Canada, South Africa, Niger and Australia.

The DOE has been able to offer new, more attractive enrichment contracts by using stockpiled uranium—material which US producers say is detrimental to their interests and contravenes federal law requiring the viability of the domestic uranium industry to be maintained.

Matters came to a head on September 19 when a federal judge in Denver, ruled that since January 1984 the DOE had entered into enrichment contracts illegally and that as of October 1, all such contracts, both domestic and foreign, were null and void. This left over 130 contracts with an estimated value of \$270m hanging in the air, and the industry is

anxiously awaiting the DOE's next move.

Although it is expected to appeal, the DOE clearly has a conflict of interest between its statutory duty to preserve the domestic mining industry and its desire to make its uranium enrichment programme self-supporting.

Further weight has been added to the producers' case by the Energy Secretary, Mr John F. DeLoach, who declared on September 25 that as of December 1984 the U.S. uranium industry was non-viable.

This declaration requires some qualification. Certain companies working high-grade deposits or using advanced mining techniques are marginally viable, but there are not enough of them to guarantee security of supply in the event of import disruption. Product prices would need to double to enable the rest of the industry to survive, according to Mr Ray Carson, president of Dallas-based Uranium Resources.

The declaration of non-viability must trigger a federal response. Congressional committees are currently reviewing both a "jobs bill," which seeks to have the Government pick up one third of the estimated \$1bn bill for cleaning up radioactive uranium mill tailings scattered across the West, and a "domestic contents bill" that would require utilities to buy at least 75 per cent of their uranium from U.S. producers.

Mr Thomas Neff, director of energy studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, told Congress that although the domestic contents bill could salvage 4,000 jobs over the next 10 years, the price of protection would be \$1m per job—money that would have to come from higher electricity tariffs.

Measures such as the erection of tariff barriers against imports are also under scrutiny, but would be unlikely to win the support of the Reagan administration, unless they were seen to be vital to national security.

## WEEKLY METALS PRICES

All prices as supplied by Metal Bulletin

**ANTIMONY:** European free market, min 99.9 per cent, \$ per tonne, in warehouse, 2,780-2,860.

**BISMUTH:** European free market, min 99.99 per cent, \$ per pound, tonne lots in warehouse, 4,042-4,230.

**CADMIUM:** European free market, min 99.95 per cent, \$ per pound, in warehouse, ingots, 0.73-0.79, sticks, 0.81-0.85.

**COBALT:** European free market, min 99.5 per cent, \$ per pound, in warehouse, 1,110-1,135.

**MERCURY:** European free

market, min 99.99 per cent, \$ per flask, in warehouse, 277-282.

**MOLYBDENUM:** European free market, min 99 per cent molybdenum trioxide, \$ per pound Mo, in warehouse, 2.65-2.70.

**SELENIUM:** European free market, min 99.5 per cent, \$ per pound, in warehouse, 7,107-7,300.

**TUNGSTEN ORE:** European free market, standard min 65 per cent, \$ per tonne unit WO, 60-67.

**VANADIUM:** European Free market, min 98 per cent V, \$ per tonne, in warehouse, 2,700-2,800.

**Other sources, \$ per pound V.O. 2.05-2.15.**

**URANIUM:** Nuxeo exchange value \$ per pound UO, 16.00.

## LONDON MARKETS

THESE WERE no fireworks on the London commodity markets yesterday. Coffee settled down after the sharp fall prompted by Brazil's drought-breaking rains on Monday and nearby prices ended little changed. Cocoa prices were somewhat lower reflecting suggestions that the Ivory Coast's 1985/86 crop could reach 550,000 tonnes, up from earlier estimates. Sugar prices were lifted modestly by news of Egyptian and Syrian buying and talk of India returning to the market as a buyer soon. On the London Metal Exchange prices were generally firmer with the biggest rise coming in zinc. Monday's fall was wiped out with the cash price gaining \$10.50 to \$469 a tonne on European trade buying and easier sterling against the dollar. Lead was also higher on trade short-covering and cash metal ended \$7.50 up at \$409 a tonne. A \$3.50 rise which lifted cash aluminium to \$563 a tonne was put down mainly to the currency factor. LME prices supplied by Amalgamated Metal Trading.

## ALUMINIUM

Unofficial + or -  
Official closing (am): Cash 561.50 (561.50), three months 559.50 (559.50), final Korb close: 561.50  
Turnover: 15,200 tonnes.

## COPPER

Higher grade Unofficial + or -  
Official closing (am): Cash 579.50 (579.50), three months 579.50 (579.50), final Korb close: 579.50  
Turnover: 18,200 tonnes.

## LEAD

Unofficial + or -  
Official closing (am): Cash 279.50 (279.50), three months 279.50 (279.50), final Korb close: 279.50  
Turnover: 18,200 tonnes.

## NICKEL

Unofficial + or -  
Official closing (am): Cash 279.50 (279.50), three months 279.50 (279.50), final Korb close: 279.50  
Turnover: 18,200 tonnes.

## ZINC

Unofficial + or -  
Official closing (am): Cash 409.10 (409.10), three months 409.10 (409.10), final Korb close: 409.10  
Turnover: 12,200 tonnes.

## GOLD

Gold fell 5/8 an ounce from Monday's close in London bullion market yesterday to finish at \$324.325. The metal opened at the same level and traded between \$324.325 and \$324.325. Once again trading was rather dull and featureless.

**GOLD BULLION (fine ounce) Nov 5**  
Opening 324.325 (324.325) 324.325 (324.325)  
Closing 324.325 (324.325) 324.325 (324.325)  
Settle 324.325 (324.325) 324.325 (324.325)

## SILVER

Silver was fixed 1/45p an ounce higher for spot delivery in the London bullion market yesterday at 422.50p. US cent equivalents of the fixing levels were: spot 607.12, down 0.75; three-month 618.18, down 0.75; 12-month 626.36, down 0.75. The metal opened at 422.50p (607.12p) and closed at 422.50p (607.12p).

## RUBBER

PHYSICALS: The London market opened slightly higher, quiet throughout the day and closed on a steady note, reports Lewis and Peet. Closing prices (bunches): spot 50.00p (50.00p), Dec 50.00p (50.00p), Jan 50.00p (50.00p), Feb 50.00p (50.00p), Mar 50.00p (50.00p), Apr 50.00p (50.00p), May 50.00p (50.00p), Jun 50.00p (50.00p), Jul 50.00p (50.00p), Aug 50.00p (50.00p), Sep 50.00p (50.00p), Oct 50.00p (50.00p), Nov 50.00p (50.00p), Dec 50.00p (50.00p), Jan 50.00p (50.00p), Feb 50.00p (50.00p), Mar 50.00p (50.00p), Apr 50.00p (50.00p), May 50.00p (50.00p), Jun 50.00p (50.00p), Jul 50.00p (50.00p), Aug 50.00p (50.00p), Sep 50.00p (50.00p), Oct 50.00p (50.00p), Nov 50.00p (50.00p), Dec 50.00p (50.00p), Jan 50.00p (50.00p), Feb 50.00p (50.00p), Mar 50.00p (50.00p), Apr 50.00p (50.00p), May 50.00p (50.00p), Jun 50.00p (50.00p), Jul 50.00p (50.00p), Aug 50.00p (50.00p), Sep 50.00p (50.00p), Oct 50.00p (50.00p), Nov 50.00p (50.00p), Dec 50.00p (50.00p), Jan 50.00p (50.00p), Feb 50.00p (50.00p), Mar 50.00p (50.00p), Apr 50.00p (50.00p), May 50.00p (50.00p), Jun 50.00p (50.00p), Jul 50.00p (50.00p), Aug 50.00p (50.00p), Sep 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**INDUSTRIALS** **Wednesday**

INSURANCES									
221	Mobley Life Sav.	22244-1	36.4	2	42	-	-	-	-
222	Metropolitan Life	22245-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
223	Do. & Am. Mut. Co.	22246-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
224	Do. & Am. Mut. Co.	22247-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
225	Metropolitan Life	22248-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
226	Metropolitan Life	22249-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
227	Metropolitan Life	22250-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
228	Metropolitan Life	22251-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
229	Metropolitan Life	22252-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
230	Metropolitan Life	22253-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
231	Metropolitan Life	22254-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
232	Metropolitan Life	22255-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
233	Metropolitan Life	22256-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
234	Metropolitan Life	22257-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
235	Metropolitan Life	22258-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
236	Metropolitan Life	22259-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
237	Metropolitan Life	22260-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
238	Metropolitan Life	22261-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
239	Metropolitan Life	22262-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
240	Metropolitan Life	22263-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
241	Metropolitan Life	22264-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
242	Metropolitan Life	22265-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
243	Metropolitan Life	22266-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
244	Metropolitan Life	22267-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
245	Metropolitan Life	22268-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
246	Metropolitan Life	22269-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
247	Metropolitan Life	22270-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
248	Metropolitan Life	22271-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
249	Metropolitan Life	22272-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
250	Metropolitan Life	22273-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
251	Metropolitan Life	22274-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
252	Metropolitan Life	22275-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
253	Metropolitan Life	22276-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
254	Metropolitan Life	22277-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
255	Metropolitan Life	22278-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
256	Metropolitan Life	22279-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
257	Metropolitan Life	22280-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
258	Metropolitan Life	22281-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
259	Metropolitan Life	22282-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
260	Metropolitan Life	22283-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
261	Metropolitan Life	22284-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
262	Metropolitan Life	22285-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
263	Metropolitan Life	22286-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
264	Metropolitan Life	22287-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
265	Metropolitan Life	22288-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
266	Metropolitan Life	22289-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
267	Metropolitan Life	22290-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
268	Metropolitan Life	22291-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
269	Metropolitan Life	22292-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
270	Metropolitan Life	22293-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
271	Metropolitan Life	22294-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
272	Metropolitan Life	22295-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
273	Metropolitan Life	22296-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
274	Metropolitan Life	22297-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
275	Metropolitan Life	22298-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
276	Metropolitan Life	22299-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
277	Metropolitan Life	22300-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
278	Metropolitan Life	22301-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
279	Metropolitan Life	22302-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
280	Metropolitan Life	22303-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
281	Metropolitan Life	22304-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
282	Metropolitan Life	22305-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
283	Metropolitan Life	22306-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
284	Metropolitan Life	22307-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
285	Metropolitan Life	22308-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
286	Metropolitan Life	22309-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
287	Metropolitan Life	22310-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
288	Metropolitan Life	22311-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
289	Metropolitan Life	22312-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
290	Metropolitan Life	22313-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
291	Metropolitan Life	22314-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
292	Metropolitan Life	22315-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
293	Metropolitan Life	22316-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
294	Metropolitan Life	22317-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
295	Metropolitan Life	22318-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
296	Metropolitan Life	22319-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
297	Metropolitan Life	22320-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
298	Metropolitan Life	22321-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
299	Metropolitan Life	22322-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
300	Metropolitan Life	22323-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
301	Metropolitan Life	22324-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
302	Metropolitan Life	22325-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
303	Metropolitan Life	22326-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
304	Metropolitan Life	22327-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
305	Metropolitan Life	22328-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
306	Metropolitan Life	22329-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
307	Metropolitan Life	22330-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
308	Metropolitan Life	22331-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
309	Metropolitan Life	22332-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
310	Metropolitan Life	22333-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
311	Metropolitan Life	22334-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
312	Metropolitan Life	22335-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
313	Metropolitan Life	22336-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
314	Metropolitan Life	22337-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
315	Metropolitan Life	22338-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
316	Metropolitan Life	22339-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
317	Metropolitan Life	22340-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
318	Metropolitan Life	22341-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
319	Metropolitan Life	22342-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
320	Metropolitan Life	22343-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
321	Metropolitan Life	22344-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
322	Metropolitan Life	22345-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
323	Metropolitan Life	22346-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
324	Metropolitan Life	22347-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
325	Metropolitan Life	22348-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
326	Metropolitan Life	22349-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
327	Metropolitan Life	22350-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
328	Metropolitan Life	22351-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
329	Metropolitan Life	22352-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
330	Metropolitan Life	22353-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
331	Metropolitan Life	22354-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
332	Metropolitan Life	22355-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
333	Metropolitan Life	22356-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
334	Metropolitan Life	22357-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
335	Metropolitan Life	22358-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
336	Metropolitan Life	22359-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
337	Metropolitan Life	22360-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
338	Metropolitan Life	22361-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
339	Metropolitan Life	22362-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
340	Metropolitan Life	22363-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
341	Metropolitan Life	22364-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
342	Metropolitan Life	22365-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
343	Metropolitan Life	22366-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
344	Metropolitan Life	22367-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
345	Metropolitan Life	22368-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
346	Metropolitan Life	22369-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
347	Metropolitan Life	22370-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
348	Metropolitan Life	22371-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
349	Metropolitan Life	22372-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
350	Metropolitan Life	22373-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
351	Metropolitan Life	22374-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
352	Metropolitan Life	22375-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
353	Metropolitan Life	22376-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
354	Metropolitan Life	22377-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
355	Metropolitan Life	22378-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
356	Metropolitan Life	22379-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
357	Metropolitan Life	22380-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
358	Metropolitan Life	22381-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
359	Metropolitan Life	22382-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
360	Metropolitan Life	22383-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
361	Metropolitan Life	22384-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
362	Metropolitan Life	22385-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
363	Metropolitan Life	22386-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
364	Metropolitan Life	22387-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
365	Metropolitan Life	22388-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
366	Metropolitan Life	22389-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
367	Metropolitan Life	22390-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
368	Metropolitan Life	22391-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
369	Metropolitan Life	22392-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
370	Metropolitan Life	22393-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
371	Metropolitan Life	22394-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
372	Metropolitan Life	22395-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
373	Metropolitan Life	22396-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
374	Metropolitan Life	22397-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
375	Metropolitan Life	22398-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
376	Metropolitan Life	22399-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
377	Metropolitan Life	22400-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
378	Metropolitan Life	22401-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
379	Metropolitan Life	22402-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
380	Metropolitan Life	22403-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
381	Metropolitan Life	22404-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
382	Metropolitan Life	22405-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
383	Metropolitan Life	22406-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
384	Metropolitan Life	22407-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
385	Metropolitan Life	22408-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
386	Metropolitan Life	22409-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	-
387	Metropolitan Life	22410-1	40.0	1	40	-	-	-	

[illegible]

FINANCIAL		Lend, etc.		CASH		STOCK		BOND		OTHER	
1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112
113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124
125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136
137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148
149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172
173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184
185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196
197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208
209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220
221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232
233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244
245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256
257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268
269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280
281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292
293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304
305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316
317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328
329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340
341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352
353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364
365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376
377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388
389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400

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at \$300 per



## LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE

## MARKET REPORT

## Early enthusiasm fades and leading shares close only marginally higher on balance

## ACCOUNT DEALING DATES

\* First Declared Last Account  
Dealings from Dealings Day  
Oct 28 Nov 8 Nov 8 Nov 18  
Nov 11 Nov 21 Nov 22 Dec 2  
Nov 25 Dec 5 Dec 6 Dec 16  
\* Note: Dealings may take  
place from 9.30 am to 2.30 pm on  
the day.

Aggressive institutional buying  
made for a spirited early trade  
in London equities and the two  
main indices spurred to new  
peaks before reacting later.  
Opening business was also  
coloured by hectic first-time  
oversubscriptions for  
tender issues of Underwoods  
shares, which achieved a healthy  
premium over the striking price.  
Shortly after the 9.30 am start  
both indices were posting double-  
figure gains. The FT-SE 100  
Share Index shot up 15 points to  
within a few points of 3400 to a  
highly-charged market. Sparking  
half-yearly profits from leading  
food retailer Sainsbury provided  
additional buoyancy not only to  
the sector but also other con-  
sumer-durable stocks.

The upsurge proved too fast  
for comfort, however, and when  
the demand faded values began  
to ease awaiting the latest news  
supply and banking statistics.  
These were announced at 2.30  
pm and, at first sight, were con-  
sidered favourable. But closer  
examination of the further sharp  
increase in bank lending coupled  
with rumours that Saudi Arabia  
and Venezuela were ready to cut  
oil prices sent a tremor through  
the market.

A succession of sales from  
smaller investors, which repre-  
sented profit-taking, caused  
further nervousness. But closer  
examination of the further sharp  
increase in bank lending coupled  
with rumours that Saudi Arabia  
and Venezuela were ready to cut  
oil prices sent a tremor through  
the market.

As widely forecast, the special-  
ist multiple retailer Underwoods  
staged an impressive debut.  
Heavily oversubscribed at the  
minimum tender price of 115p,  
and ensuring striking price of  
180p, the shares changed hands  
briskly given the large number  
of market makers and the fact  
that only 100,000 shares were  
offered. After reaching 210p the  
price reacted to settle at 204p for  
a first-day premium of 24p.

Gilt-edged securities hovered  
either side of Monday's closing  
levels. The slightly easier ster-  
ling exchange rate imparted  
early caution to the market but  
the resulting small losses were  
water against the initial optimism  
over the money supply figures  
was short-lived and in the late  
business the majority of bond  
prices were showing minor falls  
on balance.

## Life issues rise

Life issues made the running  
in insurance responding to the  
to the impressive new life busi-  
ness figures for the third quarter  
of 1985. Stock shortages accent-  
uated closing gains and Pearl

were better at £134, after £131,  
while Legal and General put on  
11 at 720p, after 733p. Britannic  
firmed 10 to 830p at Ed Equity  
and Law, to 238p and London  
Brokers gained ground in places.  
Sturge added 15 at 420p and  
Steel Bullit appreciated 13 at  
495p.

The banking sector was notable  
for revived takeover speculation  
among merchant banks. BNL  
Samuel moved up 6 to 345p,  
after 350p, while Kleinwort  
Benson added 10 to 555p, after  
560p, and Brown Shipley im-  
proved 5 at 410p. Mercury Secu-  
rities reflected a recent favour-  
able circular in the wake of the  
merger with Akroyd and  
Smithers and closed a further 25  
better at 630p, after 645p. Among  
Hire Purchases, Woodchester, in  
which Garmon Information and  
Financial Trust holds a 7 per  
cent stake, advanced 7 more to  
a 1985 peak of 132p.

Leading Breweries finished on  
a steady-to-firm note despite  
overly cautious advice from  
brokers in the wake of Sep-  
tember's disappointing beer pro-  
duction figures. Scottish and  
Newcastle featured with a gain  
of 6 to 157p amid hopes of a  
favourable decision from the  
Trade and Industry Secretary  
regarding the company's offer  
for Blackburn 60 Matthew  
Brown, 3 dearer at 440p. Other  
regions trended better reflect-  
ing speculation that a go-ahead  
for S and N could stimulate  
other bids in the sector. Xerox  
hardened a few pence to 378p,  
while Wolverhampton and  
Dudley improved 4 to 392p.  
Elsewhere, Distillers encoun-  
tered renewed profit-taking,  
most of which emanated from  
the US, and fell 10 to 450p;  
Argyll Group, which has  
reportedly failed to gain take-  
over approval, fell 10 to 450p;  
a bid until early next month,  
advanced 7 to 340p.

Selected Building material  
issues made progress on hopes  
that the Government may  
increase the level of spending on  
public sector housing. RMC  
moved up to a year's high of  
474p prior to closing 4 dearer  
at 479p, while Redland hard-  
ened a couple of pence to 349p.  
Industries closed 3 dearer at  
328p, after 330p. Mace Circle, a  
dull market on Monday on  
worries about the possibility of  
reduced gains from 12c to 10c  
following the sharp fall in the  
peso, edged up to 500p before  
drifting back to close unchanged  
at 500p. Elsewhere, confirmation  
that the company is selling its  
Ariel International property  
portfolio to a Dutch group failed  
to sustain George Wimpey which  
eased a couple of pence to 137p.  
Casta remained on offer and  
shed 6 for a two-day total of 20  
to 482p, but John Mowlem firm  
on Dartford Tunnel project  
hopes and gained 8 more to 344p,  
after 346p. Thy Homes firmed 6

to 54p, the board's confident  
statement about current trading  
outweighed the reduced annual  
profits. Proaking clipped 4  
from Wad Holdings at 254p.  
ICI, a firm and active market  
recently, fluctuated narrowly  
around the overnight level of  
694p before late selling left it  
close a net 7 off at 677p. A  
broker's profits downgrading  
continued to depress Hickson  
International, down 4 at 327p,  
a two-day loss of 26.

## Stores below best

Leading Stores often advanced  
to new highs for the year in  
initial trading as investors con-  
tinued to adopt an optimistic  
view of consumer spending  
trends. Enthusiasm petered out  
during the afternoon, however,  
and many issues finished well  
below their levels. Marks and  
Spencer, which had risen to  
583p at one stage, reverted to  
the overnight 570p, while  
Woolworth closed only 5 up on  
balance at 600p, after 610p.  
Debenhams touched a new peak  
of 940p before late selling left it  
higher at 937p, but Habitat  
Mothercare, interim results  
expected at the start of next

month, remained relatively firm  
and finished 8 higher at 524p.  
Mallot's also closed below  
their levels with a loss of 10  
to 358p, after 360p. J. Bepworth,  
up to 230p in immediate re-  
sponse to the better-than-expected  
preliminary figures, reacted to  
profit-taking and closed 4  
cheaper on balance at 220p. In  
contrast, Goldsmiths, a  
depressed market in recent  
weeks, rallied 10 to 180p.

Electronics reacted from an  
initial firm level of 500p to  
end the day 13 dearer at 513p  
on balance at 513p following the  
chairman's profits warning which  
accompanied the interim results.  
Elsewhere in Electronics, Micro  
Focus relinquished 10 to 140p  
following nervous offering ahead  
of Friday's preliminary figures,  
while Telemetric, still reflecting  
the chairman's profits warning,  
shed 3 to 100p, after 103p.  
More to 140p, British  
on the other hand rose 10 to 230p  
in response to the results and  
Electronic Rentals drew strength  
from a broker's circular and  
closed 3 to the peak of 40p.  
Cable and Wireless, initially  
higher at 625p in reply to  
de Zeete and Bevan's circular,  
reacted late to close the day 5  
lower on balance at 600p and  
vague rumours that the Govern-  
ment will announce details of  
the sale of its remaining shares  
in the company tomorrow.

Laird Group, up 12 at 219p  
after 217p, on news of the share  
in the British Rail con-  
tract, provided the main feature

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## FINANCIAL TIMES STOCK INDICES

	Nov. 5	Nov. 4	Nov. 3	Oct. 31	Oct. 30	Oct. 29	Year
Government Secs	83.87	83.83	83.83	83.83	84.04	83.84	83.84
Fixed Interest	88.60	89.64	89.67	89.64	89.59	89.48	89.33
Ordinary	1073.5	1071.1	1070.6	1069.1	1067.3	1061.5	1061.0
Gold Mines	217.5	222.9	227.8	240.0	244.6	244.4	238.9
Gold Min. Yield	4.47	4.47	4.47	4.48	4.48	4.51	4.73
Earnings, Yld. % (1984)	10.97	10.98	10.97	10.98	11.04	11.12	11.27
P/E Ratio (1984)	11.87	11.88	11.87	11.88	11.19	11.11	10.66
Total Bargains (1984)	24,721	25,421	24,553	25,103	24,413	24,972	21,372
Equity turnover %	416.53	528.57	576.37	576.67	499.87	513.39	513.39
Equity bargains	24,824	24,821	24,933	24,904	24,646	19,292	19,292
Shares traded (m)	280.2	289.4	293.5	301.1	340.6	158.2	158.2

10 am 1081.2, 11 am 1081.7, Noon 1081.4, 1 pm 1083.3,  
2 pm 1078.5, 3 pm 1077.7, 4 pm 1079.9,  
Day's High 1083.2, Day's Low 1072.7.  
Basis 100 Gov. Secs, 15/10/28. Fixed Int. 1028. Ordinary 1/7/25.  
Gold Mines 12/9/26. SE Activity 1574.  
Latest Index 91-267.  
\* Nil = 10.27.

## HIGHS AND LOWS S.E. ACTIVITY INDICES

	1985	Since Completion	Nov. 4	Nov. 5
Govt. Secs	High 83.87, Low 83.83	High 83.87, Low 83.83	1073.5	1071.1
Fixed Int.	High 88.60, Low 89.64	High 88.60, Low 89.64	217.5	222.9
Ordinary	High 1073.5, Low 1061.0	High 1073.5, Low 1061.0	1073.5	1071.1
Gold Mines	High 244.6, Low 238.9	High 244.6, Low 238.9	217.5	222.9

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outweighed the reduced annual  
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in an otherwise relatively quiet  
Engineering sector, Evered gave  
up 8 to 220p, while TCI eased 4  
to 400p on the lack of  
any bid developments. Glyved  
hardened 4 to 244p on the  
acquisition of Delta's Birm-  
ingham based copper tube business.  
Delta Group closed 2 better at  
171p. Thomas Robinson met  
fresh support and put on 7 to  
145p, while C. H. Bailey, reflect-  
ing further speculative activity,  
improved 13 to 204p.

J. Sainsbury advanced to a  
year's high of 372p before  
closing a net 6 up at 364p follow-  
ing excellent interim results.  
Tesco rose 10 to 389p in  
sympathy. Elsewhere in the  
Food sector, Unigate found sup-  
port and firmed 4 to 223p; the  
extreme highs are due on  
November 22.

## Gomme Holdings up

Gomme Holdings, reflecting  
satisfactory preliminary figures  
and the encouraging statement  
that the 23rd down at 127p  
fell to 330p before closing 5  
cheaper at 410p on the 542m  
rights issue accompanied by a  
dividend and profit forecast. The  
new demand lifted Gomme  
13 more to 350p, while bid hopes  
continued to sustain Marley, up  
6 further at 114p, and Blundell  
Pernod, 9 dearer at 127p.  
Dalgety, a dull market of late  
on worries about the tin crisis,  
rallied 6 to 468p. Parkfield, still  
reflecting profit-taking, hard-  
ened 3 more to 190p, while Kew  
Trust came to life, closing 6  
to the good at 96p, after 100p.  
Bid speculation revived in Cope  
and Profit forecast, up 10 at  
255p. Booker McConnell were  
supported at 305p, up 10, along  
with Macarthur Pharmaceuticals,  
a firmer at 225p. UDO Holdings  
responded to preliminary  
figures with a gain of 10 at  
240p. Leading miscellaneous  
industrials failed to hold early  
gains. Baxters, partly re-  
flecting 8 initial flurry in the  
sector, touched 233p  
before falling back to close 4  
cheaper on the day at 229p.  
The 10 off at 500p, while  
lighted Delta Packaging which  
attracted fresh speculative sup-  
port and advanced 15 for a two-  
day gain of 27 to 123p; the first-  
day gains are scheduled for  
Friday week.

Among Properties, Rosehaugh,  
a good market of late, settled 3  
down at 217 following the annual  
results and share sub-division  
proposals. Ahead of the 1985  
Trust rose 10 to 425p in reply to  
the increased half-year profits.  
Profit-taking clipped 10 from  
London and Edinburgh at 445p.  
Barker Banks, on the other  
hand, continued to attract buyers  
and gained 5 more to 190p.  
Among Financials, Britannia  
Arrow met further profit-taking  
and dipped 3 to 149p—still 9  
above the unwelcome share-  
exchange terms from Guinness.  
Peat Support was noted for  
Ivory and Slime, another 7 to the  
good at 1985 high of 182p.

Oil easier

Leading oils edged higher for  
much of the day, but eased after  
hours amid rumours that Saudi  
Arabia is about to announce  
price cuts or further "net-back"

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Prices at 3pm, November 5

## NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE PRICES

12 Month	High	Low	Stock	Dr	Pr	12 Month	High	Low	Stock	Dr	Pr	12 Month	High	Low	Stock	Dr	Pr	12 Month	High	Low	Stock	Dr	Pr
45	12	10	AAR		10	46	12	10	ABX		10	47	12	10	ABX		10	48	12	10	ABX		10
46	12	10	ABX		10	49	12	10	ABX		10	50	12	10	ABX		10	51	12	10	ABX		10
47	12	10	ABX		10	52	12	10	ABX		10	53	12	10	ABX		10	54	12	10	ABX		10
48	12	10	ABX		10	55	12	10	ABX		10	56	12	10	ABX		10	57	12	10	ABX		10
49	12	10	ABX		10	58	12	10	ABX		10	59	12	10	ABX		10	60	12	10	ABX		10
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115	12	10	ABX		10	256	12	10	ABX		10	257	12	10	ABX		10	258	12	10	ABX		10
116	12	10	ABX		10	259	12	10	ABX		10	260	12	10	ABX		10	261	12	10	ABX		10
117	12	10	ABX		10	262	12	10	ABX		10	263	12	10	ABX		10	264	12	10	ABX		10
118	12	10	ABX		10																		



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**Prices at 3pm, November 5**[illegible]

## OVER-THE-COUNTER

**Nasdaq national market 2.30pm prices**

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